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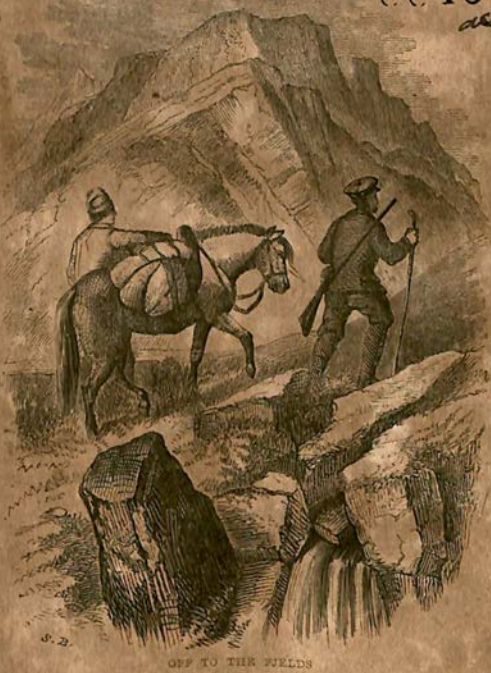
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LEIRUNGS-BRÆEN.

WILD LIFE
ON
THE FJELDS OF NORWAY

BY FRANCIS M. WYNDHAM

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OFF TO THE FJELDS

LONDON
LONGMAN, GREEN, LONGMAN, AND ROBERTS
1861

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TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

GEORGE, LORD LECONFIELD

THIS VOLUME IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY

HIS NEPHEW

PREFACE.

To lead a wild life among the snow-clad mountains of Norway, was the hope I entertained on sailing from England,—a hope which, through the kindness of acquaintances formed in the country, was fully realized.

An opportunity of gaining an insight into the pastoral and wild life led by the dairy-folk at the *sæters*, or *châlets*, and the reindeer-hunters on the fjelds was thus obtained; and, as glimpses only of that life have been given in the numerous works on Norway, I have been induced to offer these few pages to the public, with the hope that they may afford a more intimate acquaintance with, and supply a characteristic

feature of, the rural life of the Norwegian peasantry.

I may here express my warmest thanks for the hospitality which everywhere welcomed me throughout the country; but more especially is my gratitude due to my friends at Bergen and Kaupanger, by whom I was received in so friendly a manner, and who contributed most largely to the enjoyment of my visit to Norway, of which the pleasantest recollections will ever be retained.

As I have adhered to the correct spelling of *fjord* and *fjeld*, it may be well to observe that *j*, as also *hj*, have the power of the English *y* in yes; *aa* that of *o* in *cold*, or *au* in *gaudy*; *y* is pronounced as the German *ü*, as *fly* (flü); and *skydskarl* is spoken shüskarl, *sk* before *e*, *i*, and *y*, having the sound of *sh*; *æ* is equivalent to *è* in French, as in *sæter*, pronounced *sèter*, and *æ* is equal to *ai* in *air*.

For most of the altitudes given in the first few chapters I am indebted to Professor James

Forbes' "Norway and its Glaciers;" the altitudes in Chapter VII. and the remaining chapters are taken from the "Amts Karte," and have been reduced to English feet by multiplying by 1·029.

For the finishing of the drawings for the lithographs and woodcuts, I am indebted to the assistance of my mother.

A few remarks on outfit have been appended, with the view of rendering practical assistance to any who may contemplate a visit to the Fjelds of Norway.

Rogate, Sussex:
April 1861.

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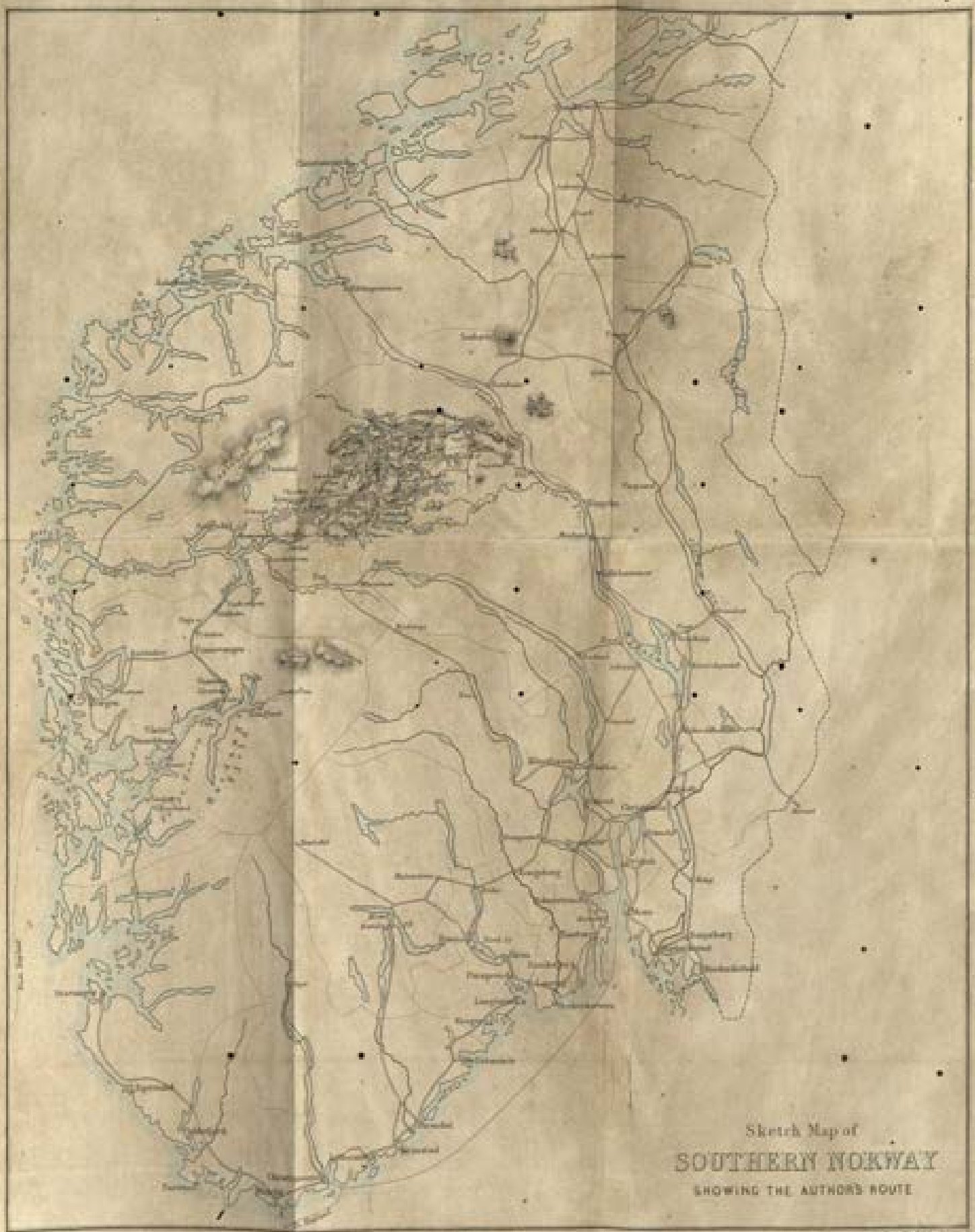
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Sketch Map of

SOUTHERN NORWAY

SHOWING THE AUTHOR'S ROUTE

WILD LIFE

ON

THE FJELDS OF NORWAY

CHAPTER I.

Voyage to Norway.—Coast Scenery.—Norsk Pilot.—Bay of Bergen.—Custom-house Officers.—Haymaking.—Maintenance of Roads.—Picture Exhibition.—English Farmer.—Leprosy Hospital.

At eleven o'clock on an unpleasant drizzly night, towards the end of July 1859, the screw steamer Anna left Hull for Bergen. With the break of day the wind rose considerably, the ship rolled, and, altogether, the two following days were anything but pleasant. On the second morning after our departure it was blowing almost a gale, and, the wind being dead ahead, our course was shaped in a more easterly direction in order to enable a sail to be set to steady the vessel; and thus

till the next morning we continued to run towards Christiansand. Although enduring all the misery of a rough passage, I felt that I was better off in my berth, small as it was, than the greater part of my fellow-passengers, who were lying coiled up on the sofas of the saloon, subjected to all the vibration and dinning rattle of the screw.

At about two o'clock on the third morning of our voyage, land was sighted off Stavanger, a town of some importance between Christiansand and Bergen. The wind by this time had subsided, and the sea was sufficiently smooth to allow of one's venturing upon deck, What a delight it was once more to breathe the fresh air, and to move about after the long confinement to a wretched berth!

Land, that joyful sight to the sea-sick passenger, greeted my eyes on emerging from the prison below; for the ship was now running, in a northerly direction, but a few miles from the rock-bound coast. Occasionally the steamer passed on the inner side of barren rocks, on which were fixed what appeared to be merely red posts—in reality marks for mariners. The scenery of the coast was less striking than my expectations had led me to anticipate. Huge mountains, it is true, rose abruptly out of the sea, some to a great height, the more lofty ones having patches of snow upon their summits. But the outline, as it stood out in dark relief

against the clear sky, was rather a straight and unvaried line, than a series of jagged peaks starting up into fantastic forms, which go so far towards constituting an essential element in the beauty of mountain scenery. Still there was something sublime in the wide expanse of water being thus abruptly terminated by a stern wall of rock. What perhaps added still more to the grandeur of the scene, was that the ocean seemed at once to acknowledge the rocky boundary which controlled it; for, instead of that restless roar of breakers which seems, in the Bay of Biscay, to show how the ocean frets at the restraint, the briny waves that washed the Norwegian coast were hushed in solemn stillness.

About nine o'clock a boat came alongside, and a weatherbeaten Norsk pilot clambered up the side of the ship, holding in his hand that everlasting painted wooden box, which contains all the treasures alike of seafarers as of wayfarers in Norway. Leaving this on the deck he at once mounted the paddlebox-bridge, took command of the ship, and, as the steam was turned on, cried out to his companions in the boat, "La go" (let go), which first Norse expression, from its similarity to English, sounded familiar in our ears.

Soon after, we approached the entrance to the Kors Fjord, about twenty miles to the south-west of Bergen. On either side rose bold rocks, rather remarkable, to even a superficial observer, from the strongly-defined

lines of stratification and cleavage; and on one of these stood a large white lighthouse. As we glided further into the recesses of the fjord, a few scattered houses came in sight, adding somewhat to the cheerfulness of the scene. Here and there little patches of grass afforded sufficient pasturage to enable the occupants of the cottages to keep a few cows; and these animals were



BAY OF BERGEN.

wandering over the rocks, no doubt rejoicing in the bright sunshine which lighted up the desolate scene.

Three hours more brought us into the bay of Bergen. The town, lying in the deepest recess of the wide-spread bay, enjoys a western aspect. A bold promontory surmounted by the citadel, under the walls of which the

Earl of Sandwich in 1665 attacked a Dutch fleet, divides that part of the bay into two inlets or harbours. In the larger of these lay numerous trading vessels, and along its shores is ranged the principal part of Bergen: many of the warehouses running out for some distance into the water, supported by massive piles. Entering the bay from the opposite direction several of the quaint square-built yachts (jœgts) with cargoes of dried cod-fish were slowly making their way towards the port under full sail.

Our ship steamed boldly into the busy harbour, and, there letting go her anchor, was quickly surrounded by a fleet of small boats, some bringing custom-house officers, others numerous friends of expected passengers. I too, fortunately, formed one of that number who had a kind friend to welcome me to his native home. His warm greeting at once dispelled the loneliness felt on arriving in a strange country where language, manners, and people are all different. In assisting me to pass my various packages through the hands of the custom-house officials my friend was invaluable. The officers seemed to be perfect strangers to shooting apparatus, for they first carefully handled and then smelled the gun-waddings and percussion caps. At last, having arrived at a satisfactory conclusion that none of these things could be included under the category of articles of food, they allowed me to repack the out-turned

baggage; and soon all my property was transferred to one of the boats, which thronged the ship's sides.

Pushing off from the vessel we pulled towards the mouth of the harbour, where we delayed for a moment on seeing what was apparently a piece of wood bobbing about on the calm surface of the water. On rowing up to it we found that it was a flat-fish; and with out-stretched arm, the fisherman attempted to grasp it in his hand; but in this he was far too slow, for the fish, slipping through his fingers, dived rapidly down through the clear water. Rounding the promontory of rock, we found ourselves in the other and smaller inlet, the shores of which, on one side, were lined for some way by the white sheds protecting the gunboats of Bergen from the weather; while, on the other, pretty villas appeared amongst the trees on the steep slope rising from the water. Towards one of these, the villa belonging to my friend's father, the boatman rowed us.

On the boat running up on the beach we disembarked, and walked up the slope to the neat white house, around which were clustered groups of pretty trees. Here we were welcomed with the true, genuine, hospitality and warmth peculiar to the Norwegians, and then joined the family party already assembled at the dinner-table. Towards evening we strolled out for a pleasant ramble by the shores of the lesser harbour, passing on our way by the docks of Bergen, where workmen were already

repairing a Glasgow-built iron steamer, which had recently been damaged by striking against a hidden rock in the Sogne Fjord. The iron plates necessary for replacing those broken, not being made in Norway, had been brought over from England.

The country people were busily engaged with their agricultural pursuits, for it was now haymaking time. Men and boys, with little short scythes, were cutting the grass, not only in the fields but also along the road-sides, and in fact not a tuft of grass in any nook or corner was left unmown. When cut it was hung to dry upon rails, which, placed at intervals and extending nearly the whole length of the fields, were constructed of horizontal fir poles fastened by withes to upright supports of about five feet in height. These rails, when well covered with grass, presented, at a little distance, the appearance of a well-clipped hedge in an old-fashioned garden.

By the road-side we noticed short posts placed at intervals of varying distance; and on the small board nailed to them were inscribed the name of a person, and a number followed by the word *alen* (an ell=2 feet). On inquiring the meaning of these posts, we were informed that the roads are repaired by the land-owners, and that to each proprietor, according to the extent of his land, is allotted a certain length of road, the maintenance of which is wholly incumbent

upon himself; and that these posts are for the purpose of marking out upon whom the repair of each portion of road devolves,— the number of *alen* denoting the extent under that person's care.

On our return home we found a substantial tea prepared, after which the gentlemen smoked cigars; and, having whiled away the time till ten o'clock, the party broke up. At this time there was still sufficient light to enable one to read, and a dim twilight lasted throughout the night.

On the following morning we rowed across the little harbour, and walked into Bergen to see the sights of the town, paying, first of all, a visit to the Exhibition of Pictures by native artists, then open. The painters whose works I most admired were Tidemand and Güde, by whom there were several joint pictures, most of them being landscapes by Güde, in which were introduced scenes of bear-hunting and reindeer-stalking; the figures were painted by Tidemand. The paintings by this artist alone were all illustrative of peasant life, and the picture which struck me most was a son taking leave of his old and infirm father. The scene was placed in the interior of a cottage, the arrangements of which were beautifully delineated; and, though the details were minutely finished, they were subordinate to the general effect of the picture.

Next we proceeded to the German church, the one

most deserving of a visit; and afterwards to the quays and warehouses. Alongside one of these lay a quaint broad-beamed ship, engaged in the cod-fish trade: she had but recently come in from the Loffoden Islands, the seat of the great cod-fishery, and a number of men were busily occupied in transferring the dried fish from the ship to the warehouse. Lying tightly packed in the hold, and filling up the entire space of it, the fish presented a very curious appearance, and might readily have been mistaken for large dried leaves. The cod-fish, as they were thrown out, were sorted, and, each fish having been weighed, the finest were laid aside for exportation, while the others were probably reserved for home consumption. A great proportion of these cod-fish are shipped for Spain, where the strict fasts in Lent occasion a large demand.

Leaving the quays we visited the museum, of which the collection of antiquities is probably the most valuable part. In the natural history department I was much disappointed, as there was a great deficiency in specimens of the large wild animals of the country, the only representative being a small elk; bears, wolves, gluttons, and foxes formed no part of the collection.

In the afternoon we took a walk through pretty green meadows, rising out of which towered fine, bold, rocks. Our object was partly to see an English farmer, who lived a few miles to the south of the town, and

from whom I hoped to obtain some information with respect to shooting in Norway. On learning that it was not my intention to proceed very far north, he recommended the Dovre Fjeld and the country adjacent as the best for sport. In the course of conversation, he inquired whether I purposed to proceed alone, without an interpreter; and by my reply, "that having travelled a good deal on the continent, I thought that Norway would probably present as few difficulties as other countries," I fear I may have caused him some disappointment, as it was afterwards told me that he was occasionally employed by Englishmen as interpreter.

Before leaving Bergen, being anxious to provide ourselves with a few necessaries, we passed a considerable time in shopping — a very tedious operation, the Norsemen being by no means expeditious in business. Almost all goods are of English manufacture, and consequently there is much less room for selection than in England, and the articles are frequently of an inferior quality. One afternoon was spent in further exploring the town; the streets, as also the people, have a very German appearance. The houses are almost all built of wood, painted white, and roofed with tiles, which are chiefly imported from Holland and Belgium. At a short distance from the town stands a large white building—an hospital for lepers; the disease of leprosy is rather prevalent, and is sup-

posed to be of much the same nature as the old eastern complaint. Pontoppidan, Bishop of Bergen in 1751, ascribes this disease, among the inhabitants of Bergen, to their oily fish diet. From an eminence near this hospital, on the Christiania road, the view is very striking, commanding the whole of the town, and extending over the bay till bounded by the bar of rocky islands which shelter it from the force of the Atlantic Ocean.

Saturday, 30th July, was fixed for our departure on our tour in the country, and consequently Friday evening was spent in preparing for the start, stocking the provision-box with bread, &c., and reducing the baggage to the smallest possible amount for travelling in the wild mountain regions.

CHAP. II.

Leave Bergen.—*Roches Moutonnées.*—Raisin Soup.—Women Rowers.—Sandvig.—A ravenous Bear.—Start for Björnebol.—Stone Sœters.—Fine Valley.—Hardanger Costume.—Interior of Farmhouse.—Expanding Beds.—Bear-Hunt.—A Cow torn by the Bear.—Peasants' Weapons.—Grand Scenery.—Return to Sandvig.

THE weather having been extremely unfavourable during our stay of four days at Bergen, it was with great delight that we hailed a bright sunshine and a clear sky on the morning of our departure. After breakfast, rowing round into the harbour, we made for one of the government steamers which was already issuing forth volumes of dense smoke.

The anchor weighed, we were soon steaming over the calm waters of the bay, and in a short time, on turning down to the Kors Fjord, the town of Bergen was lost to view. Occasionally the steamer touched at various small places to take up and set down passengers. When the outlet of the Kors Fjord into the open sea was already in sight we changed our course to a southerly direction, and entered a large expanse

of water shut off from the main ocean by numerous islands of barren rock.

The scenery again rather disappointed me, being devoid of striking mountain forms. The horizon was bounded by a lofty wall of rock, from which undulating hills rounded at the tops,—*roches moutonnées* of Swiss authors,—sloped gradually down to the sea. Such forms have been generally attributed to the action of glaciers, by which a great surface of Norway was probably once covered,—a view which tends to the explanation of so many erratic blocks, evidently transported by glacial action from the mountains of Scandinavia, being distributed over northern Germany.

Leaving this inland sea we entered a gorge, resembling some of the bolder parts of the Rhine, and this was certainly the finest scenery we had as yet seen since quitting Bergen. The rocks, clad with birch trees and alders, rose perpendicularly on either side; the whole presenting much more the appearance of river scenery than of an inlet of the sea. Emerging hence, we came upon the small island of Terroen, and here we were to take leave of the steamer. On the vessel stopping opposite the barren rock, a couple of boats put off to take the passengers on shore.

The steamer, immediately pursuing her course towards Christiania, was almost out of sight when we

landed at the only habitation on the island, the Post-house, or *Station* as it is called, whence boats might be engaged, at fixed rates, to any of the neighbouring places. Here we were fortunate in meeting an engineer officer, who was introduced to us by a Norwegian gentleman with whom we had become acquainted during our stay in Bergen, and who, being now on his return to Sandvig on the Hardanger Fjord, had most kindly invited us to his house.

Our newly-made acquaintance, the engineer, was staying at Terroen, being engaged in surveying the adjoining country for the Amts Karte, or Ordnance Maps; and, with the usual hospitality shown to strangers in Norway, he invited us to dine with him. A soup made of raisins and prunes commenced the repast, and this was replaced by some excellent boiled salmon and potatoes, rendered more palatable by a bottle of good claret. While waiting for the boat in which to proceed, we were addressed in English by a man, apparently the skipper of some trading vessel, who was attired in a suit of check with a pattern of very broad squares, who said that many English came to Terroen in yachts, some calling themselves *lords*, "but whether they be so or not I cannot tell;" then he abruptly asked whether we were lords.

At length the boat was in readiness, and, accompanied by the officer, we started on our voyage. Our

future host had already preceded us, having some business to transact at a farm on the north side of the fjord; and thither we followed him, though it was out of the direct route to Sandvig. On the way we passed a boat rowed by two women, whose dark blue bodices, embroidered with red, and bright green sleeves, had a very gay appearance.

Disembarking, we walked up to the farmhouse, where we joined our future host, and with him proceeded to a small church close by. It was a quaint little building of wood, but possessing nothing much worthy of remark. On leaving it the officer observed that it was formerly the invariable custom of the peasants to go to church armed; and the result was that, after the service, a pitched battle was frequently fought between the people of different districts. These, however, are the deeds of days gone by; but even now, when the people of one valley go over into another, a battle sometimes ensues, which usually owes its origin to trials of skill and strength between the two parties.

At about nine o'clock in the evening we reached Sandvig, in a direct line about seven or eight miles from Terroen; but our excursion to the northern shore of the fjord fully accounted for the late hour of our arrival. Sandvig is prettily situated on the shores of a secluded bay, shut off from the main fjord by a

massive island of rock, acting as an effectual barrier to the violence of the storms which frequently rage on the Hardanger. Here is the entrance to a grand valley, down which rushes a fine foaming torrent; while on either side the mountains tower to a considerable height, some of them having patches of snow on their summits.

The snow line in this neighbourhood Professor James Forbes observed to be about 4500 feet. Further inland it has a greater elevation; the difference, here as elsewhere, being due to the greater moisture of the coast climate and the more temperate heat of the sun during the summer months. A striking instance of a coast or insular climate lowering the snow line may be found in Iceland, where, in lat. 65°, the snow lies at 3100 feet above the sea, while in the same latitude in Norway the snow line in the interior is at 3900 feet, and even on the coast 3500.

The residence of our host stood but a few hundred yards from the landing-place, in the midst of a plot of grass on which were dotted a number of apple trees. These were covered, not with apples,—for the season was still too early,—but with innumerable magpies, which sat among the branches, keeping up a perpetual chatter. Magpies being universally persecuted in England, it was curious to see them occupying a perfectly different position in society; but these birds

appear to be everywhere protected in Norway, and to be esteemed, as it were, almost sacred.

According to the national custom, on strangers entering a house, a bottle of wine was forthwith produced, and the host drank to our welcome; while we, in our turn, filled our glasses and drunk to his health. This warm welcome is very pleasing to the feelings of the traveller, perceiving, as he cannot fail to do, that it proceeds so thoroughly from hearts overflowing with the spirit of hospitality.

On the following day, Sunday, we strolled out before dinner, and heard sad accounts of the depredations of a bear in the neighbouring mountains. In the eight days immediately preceding our arrival, it had destroyed no less than twenty cows, four of which had been killed on the Friday night. At about three o'clock, on our return, we learned that during our absence an order had come round from some authority for a general bear-hunt on the morrow, in which every man, who was able, would be expected to join. Such an opportunity might not again be met with, and, our host begging us to stay at Sandvig as long as it should be agreeable to us, we decided to remain for the hunt.

Dinner concluded, we busied ourselves with the preparations for starting to the mountains; for, the scene of the bear's exploits being at some distance, it was found to be absolutely necessary to start the same

evening, in order that we might reach the ground to be searched along with the other hunters. The only means of transporting our provisions, rugs, and mackintoshes, in case of a bivouac, was on men's backs, and accordingly two peasants were engaged for the purpose.

At about six in the evening we found ourselves on our way to a farmhouse called Björneböl (bear's palace), eight or nine miles distant. For the first two miles from Sandvig there was a tolerable road, ending, however, in a mere track, which led first of all across the river on stepping-stones, and then ascended the steep rocky ground lying as a barrier directly across the valley. On reaching the summit of this ridge, from whence the water ran eastwards and westwards, we halted for a few minutes to look back down the valley at the view which extended over Sandvig and across the Hardanger Fjord till it was bounded by the mountains on the further side of the water.

Turning away we pushed onwards, but had scarcely proceeded a hundred yards when a view still more magnificent burst upon us. Huge mountains rose majestically in the distance; while down the narrow gorge could be traced the foaming course of an impetuous torrent, which, after raging and boiling in its contracted channel, lost its waters in those of a small lake at our feet. Apparently there was no outlet to

the lake, so precipitously did the rocks close in on either side. But as we descended to the shores, a narrow cleft became visible, through which the water, flowing calmly out, rolled along in a southerly direction to the Matre Fjord.

To show how little general maps can be trusted, Professor Munch's map — by far the best, with the exception of the Amts Karte — is here completely at fault; for, instead of tracing the course of the river, southwards from this point, into the Matre Fjord, the map continues to direct it due east till it discharges its waters into the Hardanger Fjord, — a physical impossibility, from the high ridge which here runs completely across the valley.

On the acclivity overlooking the lake stood a group of stone *sœters*, or mountain dairies, corresponding to the *châlets* of Switzerland. They were miserable hovels, with barely room for one person's sleeping accommodation, and consequently another similar building was required for the milk. A few solitary cows, wandering about over the adjoining pasturage, were the only living creatures to be seen.

Threading our way through the thick brushwood by the lake side, we climbed the rising ground beyond, and followed a rough track along the northern side of the valley. Now the path overhung the torrent, which at one time dashed with a loud roar over the obtruding

rocks, while at another its dark waters were hushed in stillness in some gloomy, fathomless pool; and now the track led through waving birch woods, clothing the sides of the valley in great profusion, and enhancing the scene with their bright green foliage. Once more descending, we reached another lake, larger but less picturesque than the preceding one.

Crossing a stream, which fell headlong down from the rocks, we next encountered a scramble of no ordinary difficulty. The rocks, dipping almost perpendicularly into the green waters of the lake, seemed to preclude all further advance; but, thanks to a few cracks and inequalities, we were enabled to gain just sufficient foothold to make the passage practicable. Glad we were when it was passed; for a false step or an unsteady grasp would have been undoubtedly followed by a plunge into the cold water below.

At the top of a steep rocky ascent we found a small gate, the purpose of which, in such a wild, open region, was scarcely apparent; but very possibly it might be the boundary mark of different pasture grounds. Soon after traversing a comparatively level tract of rocky ground, we came in sight of a third lake; and a long descent brought us, at ten o'clock, to the farm of Björneböl.

The establishment consisted of several buildings constructed entirely of wood; two of which were appropri-

ated to the inhabitants, while cattle and sheep found shelter in the others,—the lofts being well filled with hay, and other articles of farm use. The situation of Björneböl was extremely beautiful: the buildings occupied some flat grassy land near the shores of the lake, which here expanded into a wide sheet of water. At about a couple of hundred yards from the farm the river burst in a fine cascade, over a wall of rock, and fell with a loud roar into the lake below. The height of the fall was inconsiderable, but fully compensated by the great volume of water, and the picturesque way in which it dashed over the rocks. On the opposite side of the lake stood other farm-buildings, of the same description as those of Björneböl.

Entering the main building we found that the inhabitants had already retired to rest; but, as the peasants are dressed equally by night as by day, some of them soon rose to receive us. Here we again experienced the extreme hospitality of the Norwegians; for, with that frankness and good feeling which asks no questions about intrusion, we were immediately welcomed as guests.

Our hostess was a stout, square-built, person, and the very picture of kindness and good-humour; she wore the head-dress peculiar to the people of the Hardanger district, consisting of a thick woollen cap of a dark-blue colour, fitted closely to the head, and rising up at the

back in a flat horse-shoe shape; the body of her dress was of the same dark-blue cloth, embroidered in front with bright red; it was without sleeves, but her white linen ones contrasted very prettily with the dark bodice; the petticoat was of the same material. Quitting the room for a moment, the good wife returned with a bowl of warm milk—unfortunately goat's milk—which, when heated, acquires a disagreeable flavour.

Conversation now turned on the events of the coming day, in the course of which we learned that we had still a considerable distance to go before reaching the parts frequented by the bear. Not having as yet acquired sufficient Norse to understand much of the conversation, I amused myself by looking round at the arrangements of the room. Enough light still entered through the window to allow of an indistinct view of the interior, which was also partially lighted by the flickering embers that lay in the huge triangular-shaped fireplace. Three or four beds stood round the room against the wall, all of which were well tenanted; some being occupied by as many as three or four persons.

When conversation began to flag, the engineer entertained the audience with a song; after which, on inquiring where we could pass the night, we were shown into the adjoining building, in the principal room of which there were three beds—two of them, fortunately, unoccupied. The bed of a Norwegian

peasant, which is always extremely short, very much resembles a large wooden box on four short legs; a quantity of hay forms the mattress, and over this is laid a canvas sheet and a blanket. The other bed in the room was already occupied by two men, but, being constructed on an expansive principle, it could still contain two more. In beds of this construction, two of the posts—a head and a foot one—are attached to a movable set of boards, which, when the posts are drawn out, form the bottom to the new part; a head and foot board also slide in and out with the rest of the expanding part, so that a perfect bed is formed of double the size of the original one.

In this enlarged receptacle, the two peasants who accompanied us took up their quarters for the night. A room adjoining was equally well stocked with men, who had come hither on the same errand. House-room was to us quite an unexpected luxury, and, having come fully prepared to find every corner occupied, a bivouac in the open air would not have caused us any surprise.

By daybreak next morning we were all awake; but what was our disappointment when, on looking out, we found that rain was pouring in torrents. In hopes that later in the day the weather might improve, we determined to defer our start for an hour or two. But five, six, and seven o'clock passed away, and still the rain

continued. So, after a substantial breakfast of raw smoked salmon and bread, which we had brought with us, and milk from the farm, we started off in search of the bear.

Our path continued up the valley, and by the side of the same river, whose course we had followed the previous evening. Scrambling up the precipitous wall of rock, over which the river fell into the lake, we found ourselves, as it were, in quite a different valley. At one time we traversed flat grassy land by the side of the river, here flowing gently along; while at another the path overhung the course of the torrent, which now boiled and foamed over the rocky obstacles in its narrow channel.

About an hour's walk brought us to a couple of stone sœters, and here we sat down for a short time to rest; but soon we continued our toil over the rocks with renewed vigour. Hence the track led over still more difficult ground; and by this time the level walking had entirely ceased, for the sides of the valley descended in a very steep slope, ending, at about fifty feet above the river, in a perpendicular precipice of rock. The sides, however, were well grown with birch trees, which were generally within reach of grasp whenever a difficult place rendered it necessary to use more than ordinary caution.

At last, after scrambling along for about seven miles,

we reached three or four stone sœters, which had evidently been long untenanted. At this spot, where the valley, turning at right angles, pursued an easterly direction, three men, who had come from the neighbourhood of Sandvig by a different track, joined our party. Shortly before reaching these sœters, they had passed a cow much torn and lacerated by the bear, from whose embraces the poor animal seemed with difficulty to have escaped. Here we had recourse to our provisions; the peasants took *flad-bröd*, flat barley cake, from knapsacks, quenching their thirst with water mixed with some rye meal, which, they consider, renders the drink more wholesome.

I had almost expected that there would have been a general assembly of hunters, but it seemed that the natives of each village were to beat the country nearest to their homes. To our party, consisting of twelve men, was apportioned the northern side of the valley; another band from Sandvig taking the south side. Soon, two of the peasants, quitting us, ascended the north side of the valley, so as to command the summit of the ridge. Immediately upon the report of their fire-arms announcing to us that they had gained their position, we also set off.

Four or five streams, rushing down from the heights to join the river, had here to be forded, but, being scarcely above our knees, they were passed without

difficulty. Now we scrambled along, keeping a vigilant watch, and firing our guns to rouse the bear from its lurking-place, and also as signals to other peasants on the opposite side of the valley. Considering the wide extent of ground which we covered, it was striking that no birds, either large or small, were seen.

The weapons of our party were of various descriptions: one man carried a long single-barrelled gun, to which he had lately fitted a new, but very rude, stock; another was armed with a large horse-pistol; while an axe formed the equipment of a third. The apparatus used by the peasants for loading their guns was very complicated, consisting of a powder-horn, stopped at the small end by a peg of wood, and a leathern bag containing bullets, suspended from the neck by a string. No measure was used for the powder, the correct quantity being ascertained by observing how far the ramrod projected above the muzzle, more powder being added if it did not stand high enough. A piece of tow was next rammed down and well hammered, after which followed the forcing home of the bullet, an operation the most trying of all to the patience, and attended with the probability of the ramrod snapping in two,—a pleasant crisis when facing a wounded bear!

Unfortunately we saw nothing of Bruin; but that he had been in the neighbourhood was very evident

from the carcases of three cows: one of these was on the opposite side of the river, while the other two were lying among the rocks, apparently just as they had fallen. Scarcely a mark of teeth or claws was visible; the poor animals having seemingly been hugged to death; neither had been in the least devoured, and probably they were destined for the bear's autumnal stock of food.

The country was extremely beautiful, especially when the sun, at intervals breaking through the dark clouds, shed a bright gleam over the sombre rocks and the green birches. But the finest view of all was obtained from a bold rock—the limit of our advance. About two miles from this spot a grand wall of rock abruptly terminated the valley; over this the river, fed by an immense glacier, the Folge Fond, fell with a loud roar into the valley below; while lofty mountains beyond formed a noble background. A few remaining cows, wandering near some sœters on the opposite side of the river, were the only living creatures in this scene of sublime solitude.

Pleasant it was to gain shelter for a time under the roof of the stone hovels, where the raw smoked sheep's ham and dry bread, from the provision-box, were fully appreciated. In retracing our steps we experienced some difficulty in finding our way, as the two peasants who accompanied us were but slightly acquainted with

the country; but fortunately, by following the course of the river, we could not fail to reach Björneböl, and it was safely regained between five and six.

Sufficient time just remained before darkness set in to allow of our proceeding to Sandvig. The streams in our path had, during the last twenty-four hours, assumed a very different aspect; and even those which had been almost dry on the previous evening were now dashing along in angry torrents, sometimes almost knee-deep. On the way we met a party of men going to Björneböl who stopped to have a long conversation, chiefly about the bear-hunt. They were fine specimens of the people belonging to the Hardanger district, most of them being fully six feet high, and well and strongly built. Their dress, that peculiar to the whole of the Bergenstift, or province of Bergen, consisted of a round jacket of blue cloth, with trousers and waistcoat of the same material, the buttons being of silver; while a flat-crowned glazed hat was worn on the head.

After a walk of about thirty miles, in an almost incessant rain, it was a great delight to find ourselves once more under the roof of our hospitable friend at Sandvig.

CHAP. III.

Bad Weather.—Norwegian Boats.—Mode of Steering.—Storm on the Fjord.—Take refuge in a Cottage.—Flad-Brödd.—Coloured Blankets.—Waterfalls.—Leave the Hardanger.—Loquacious Boatman.—Stolkjœrres.—Walled Bridges.—Drikke-penge.

THE rain next morning was still falling in torrents, and the wind blew such a gale as to preclude all possibility of venturing upon the fjord. This was a great mortification, as we had intended starting early in a boat up the fjord. The boatmen assured us that to attempt to leave in such weather would be perfect madness; and, as the only means of travelling was by water, on account of the precipitous sides of the fjord, we were doomed to spend the greater part of the day in looking out of the window at the rain and the magpies on the apple trees.

Towards the afternoon the wind, slightly abating, gave us some hopes; and we determined, if possible, to start without further delay. But our plans had now been changed, on account of the bad weather, and we resolved, instead of visiting the Folge Fond at Bon-

dehuus, and other places of interest on the fjord, concluding with the Vöring Foss—the highest waterfall but one in Europe—to go straight to the end of the fjord, and thence with all speed to the upper parts of the Sogne Fjord, where we hoped to reach a drier climate.

But it was very difficult to find boatmen to accompany us; for they all steadily refused to go at any price. At last, however, we were fortunate enough to secure the services of two men as far as Eide, at the head of a branch inlet, called the Gravens Fjord. Late in the afternoon we walked down to the landing-place, and, bidding farewell to our kind friends, lay down on the hay at the bottom of the boat. Wrapped in our mackintosh coats, and with a large india-rubber sheet—seven feet long by four broad—drawn over us, we prepared to defy the torrents of rain. In another instant the sail was run up and the boat was dashing along over the waves.

Norwegian boats are peculiarly built; they are almost flat-bottomed, low amidships, but rising high at stem and stern in a sharp curve, both being exactly similar. The rudder is curved to fit the stern, and very narrow; but the want of breadth is compensated by the depth to which it descends into the water: in a transverse direction, through a hole in the top of it, is fixed one end of a flat piece of wood about a foot long, to the

other end of which a stick, of about a yard in length, is attached by a couple of iron loops or staples. This stick the coxswain holds in his hand, under his arm, steering the boat by merely moving the stick longitudinally backwards and forwards. The ordinary mode of steering with a *tiller* would be impracticable, the steersman's seat being placed rather far forward; so that the end of the tiller would be often far beyond the side of the boat and quite out of reach. One advantage of the Norwegian plan is that the coxswain need never move his body in the smallest degree, whatever may be the position of the rudder.

The wind, though less violent than it had been in the forenoon, was still blowing hard; and, even before leaving the comparatively calm waters of the bay, two or three sharp squalls rushed upon us,—a foretaste only of what we should experience on the open fjord. Beyond the point of the island could be seen white-crested waves rolling angrily along. The aspect of the weather was very threatening, and, in reality, we would gladly have returned to Sandvig.

Immediately on leaving the shelter of the island, up went the bows of the boat,—then followed a lurch, and a wave dashing against the side, though cleverly avoided by the coxswain, showered a drenching spray over the little craft. The wind, fortunately, was favourable for the direction in which we were going; and, the main

and foresail being well filled, the boat bounded rapidly over the waves.

The duties of the sailors were no sinecures, the frequent occurrence of squalls requiring great watchfulness. One man steered and managed the main sheet; while the other, sitting by the mast, held, in one hand, the peak halliards (or rope for hoisting the sail), and, in the other, a rope attached to the peak by which it could be lowered at any instant. No sooner was a squall observed sweeping over the waves, than the mainsail was hauled rapidly down, and held firmly till the gust had rushed past and all immediate danger was over.

The peasants were fine, dauntless fellows, and worked well and decisively together as they whistled and sang despite of the storm. One of these was the man who had accompanied me on the previous day, and from him we gained some information about the result of the bear-hunt. Bruin had not been seen by any one, having, he remarked, probably taken alarm at the guns which the people of the sœters had been constantly firing both by day and night, and decamped to more peaceable valleys.

By the shore in some places, at the mouths of rivers, we saw high scaffolds overhanging the fjord; on these, when the salmon begin to ascend the rivers, a peasant takes his position, watching a net below, which he draws suddenly up as the fish pass over. Three or

four large ducks, at one time, came sailing over the boat within easy shot; but, the guns being well covered up and protected from the rain, the birds passed by unhurt.

As evening drew on, the storm seemed rather to increase, and some terrific squalls tried the nerve and vigilance of the boatmen to the fullest extent; and, so threatening was the aspect of the sky that, it was determined at once to make for land, and run the boat ashore at the first habitation that should be seen. About an hour afterwards we landed at a small jetty, near a neat little cottage, whence a man, on seeing our approach, came out and kindly assisted us in carrying the baggage up from the boat.

What a delight it was to be once more safe on dry land after four hours on the boisterous fjord! Entering the cottage, we were shown into a large room, rendered insupportably hot by a close stove. At a loom a woman was sitting at work, busily employed in weaving the thick coloured blankets used as bed-covers, and also in the boats. Weaving being one of the chief in-door occupations of the Norwegian peasant women, scarcely a cottage or farm-house is to be met with which does not possess a loom.

Although we had brought with us all our baggage, we had not yet inquired whether we could be accommodated for the night, having hitherto been so

much occupied in getting under shelter. However, no difficulty was made, and we were at once shown into an uninhabited room on the ground floor.

In one corner of the apartment stood a bed. Besides this was a chest of drawers and three large wooden boxes, painted blue and red, on which were inscribed the names of the persons under whose auspices they had been built, and also the date of structure. In these trunks, which are sometimes almost three feet high, three broad and five long, the peasants stow away their valuable goods and chattels; and the construction of one of these receptacles is probably an event in a peasant's life. In one corner stood a pile of flad-bröd (literally *flat bread*), the food of the country. It is made of fine barley meal, not of oatmeal, still less coarse oatmeal. I never even saw oatmeal in Norway, though I often asked for it; and was always told, without exception, that flad-bröd was made of barley meal. Flad-bröd is baked in thin circular cakes of about two feet in diameter; and, as it will keep for a great length of time, there is usually a large quantity in stock, kept in store-houses, or, failing them, in any large unoccupied room. Wheaten bread, excepting in the chief towns, such as Christiania or Bergen, is never met with; but the peasants make rye bread, which they bake in small loaves, or rather large rolls, and distinguish them by the name of *kage-bröd*, or cake bread.

Supper was our first consideration after installing ourselves in our new quarters. Wheaten bread and a piece of bacon from our provision-box, placed upon enamelled iron plates, were laid out on one of the big boxes; and tea having been made in the little tea-pot belonging to our camp-kettle, which contained besides plates, cups, knives, forks, and spoons, we sat down cheerfully to our meal.

After supper we drew lots for the bed, which fell to me; but the inmates of the cottage happened just then to enter, and, finding, to their great astonishment, that we were preparing another sleeping-place upon the floor, most good-naturedly supplied us with another mattress.

Next morning, to our great joy, the fjord was quite calm, and we hastily prepared for a start. In return for the night's lodging we gave the cottagers half a dollar, or 2*s.* 3*d.*, with which they were greatly pleased; and before leaving, I purchased one of the coloured blankets for four dollars, or about 18*s.* of English money. The boatmen, on hearing the price, gravely shook their heads, leading me to suppose that I had been greatly imposed upon; but I found that the usual value had only been exceeded by half a dollar, which was not by any means regretted, as the blanket afterwards proved of essential use.

The wind, though it had greatly abated, fortunately still continued to blow from the same quarter; and we

glided rapidly up the sombre fjord. But the weather was far from settled, for soon after our departure the rain began again to fall. At intervals the sun, breaking through the dense mass of overhanging cloud, imparted to the scenery a more cheerful aspect than it had hitherto worn; but still the mists floated along the tops of the cliffs, apparently resolved that the beauties of the fjord should not be disclosed. On the whole I must confess that the fjords of Norway did not fulfil my expectations; for, though exceedingly beautiful, they become, after a time, very monotonous.

The great abundance of water in this district was very striking, reminding one of the Pyrenees: foaming cascades poured down the rocks in all directions; some were of very considerable size, giving audible intimations of their presence; while others, discernible only by a white streak, which, frequently reaching in one unbroken line from the summit of the cliffs to the green waves of the fjord, bore more resemblance to a long thread than a stream of water.

On nearing the point where the fjord separates into two branches, one of which leads to Eide, near Graven, and the other to Utne, the sun broke through the clouds and seemed to promise better weather. For a moment we hesitated whether we should take the right-hand branch to Utne, and prosecute our old plan of visiting the Vöring Foss; but, on more deliberate considera-

tion, we again abandoned that excursion and continued our course towards the Gravens Fjord. The wind, by this time, had almost subsided, and we were obliged to lower the mast and get out the oars. The tide running out caused a strong current, and, the boat being heavy, the remaining six miles were but slowly accomplished.

This part of the fjord was much grander than any that we had hitherto seen; and the rocks, rising perpendicularly to an immense height, were partly covered with beautiful birch trees. Numerous sea-gulls, skimming over the calm fjord, contrasted, as they soared gaily in the air, with the solemn grandeur of the scene. At last, arrived at Eide, at the end of the Gravens Fjord, we disembarked; and as soon as the baggage had been removed from the boat, we paid the boatmen, receiving in return the customary shake of the hand. Shaking hands after receiving payment is the invariable custom of the Norwegian peasant; it indicates a kindly feeling, and is as much as to say that the receiver has had a favour conferred upon him in being employed, for which as well as for the money he wishes to thank the giver.

Bidding *farvel* (farewell) to the boatmen, we walked, accompanied by the *skydsskaffer*, as the postmaster is called, to the *station*, or post-house, of Eide. Soon leaving this, followed by a cart carrying our baggage, we proceeded on foot to the shores of a small lake,

where we embarked in a boat rowed by three men,—the two in the bows pulling one oar each, while the third, or "stroke," pulled a pair. The latter, an old man very ragged in apparel, had no lack of conversation, and was excessively proud of being able to say a few words in English. Volunteering the English and Norwegian pence-tables, he discoursed upon the different values of the coins. Innumerable gesticulations and grimaces were made use of to impress the subject more fully upon us; the intervals of conversation being filled by urging the other two men to row, while he pulled away in a most vehement manner, doing more work than the others combined.

This lake struck me as being much more beautiful than the fjord; in some parts the mountains towered abruptly above it, while in others the shores were bordered with green fields, amongst which stood the village of Graven. Hence there is a track across the mountains to Ulvik, by which we should have returned from the Vöring Foss had we accomplished our former plans. In about half an hour we arrived at Vasenden, at the other end of the lake. No carrioles, the best conveyances of the country, being kept at this station, we procured a couple of carts, called *stolkjærre* (stool-carts), in which to proceed on our way to Vossevangen, about two Norsk, or fourteen English, miles distant.

A *stolkjærre*—used for agricultural purposes as well as for conveying passengers—is a small two-wheeled

vehicle, at the four corners of which are fixed upright iron bars projecting about six inches above the sides; a seat, fastened at right angles to two bars of wood, is attached to the cart by inserting the ends of the wooden bars into the eyes of the iron supports. There are no springs, but the elasticity of the wooden bars, supported only at the ends, causes them to act as such, so that the jolting is only comparative to what it would be were one to sit at the bottom of the cart.

Delay sufficient to satisfy even the Norsk peasants having elapsed, we drove off from Vasenden. The road skirted the side of a clear river, which flowed into the lake at the village we had just quitted; and the valley, though the arable land was of limited extent, showed great signs of fertility,—almost all the fields producing rye and barley, the greater part of which was already cut and perched upon poles to dry. Thick woods of birch and alder clothed the sides of the hills, which rose precipitously to a considerable height on either side of the valley. After a jolt of about a couple of miles a steep hill brought the ponies to a walk, and we all alighted from the carts. In a long steep ascent the road wound up the hill, and about midway crossed the river between two cascades, one above and the other below the bridge. The lower cascade could scarcely be seen, on account of its perpendicular fall, but the upper one presented a fine

view,—it was certainly pretty, but the volume of water was inconsiderable.

On reaching the summit the road led through fir-clad valleys, and, being tolerably level, we trotted merrily along at a brisk pace, the *skydskarl*, or post-boy, keeping up a running conversation the whole time. He was very loquacious on the subject of ages, telling me how old both he and his pony were, which he made an excuse for asking me the respective ages of myself and dog, a red and white setter. The pronunciation of "Shot," the dog's name, was very difficult to him, but so interested was he in the animal that he persevered till, after repeating the name many times, he at last caught the right sound, of which feat he was excessively proud. Along we jogged, chatting, laughing, jolting, and rattling down the hills, at a fearful pace. At length we emerged into a more open country, but the darkness of the night prevented us from judging of the scenery. Two rivers were presently crossed on wooden bridges, protected from the weather by substantial walls and roofs. As we rumbled over the bridges it seemed almost as though we were entering a fortified town; but the delusion speedily vanished as we again found ourselves surrounded by fir forests. Soon another road was joined, which the telegraph-posts and wires showed to be the highway from Bergen to Christiania.

At eleven at night we entered the large village of Vossevangen, and, in a few minutes more, the stolkjœrres drew up before the hotel to which the skydsskaffer (postmaster) of Eide had recommended us. After knocking for a short time, we succeeded in rousing the inmates. The two skydskarls (post-boys) were not a little disappointed at receiving no *drikke-penge*, or drink-money, which, as we told them, we withheld as a mark of disapprobation of their having filled their carts with hay stolen from a field by the road-side. As it was quite dark when they were collecting the hay, we had not been able to perceive what they were doing, or the pilfering would have been prevented; and, when the deed was done, we could not remonstrate with effect from our ignorance of the language, neither did we think it prudent to risk the chance of a fight in such a desolate country by turning the hay out of the carts.

After some refreshment we went comfortably to bed, a great relief after two days' wearisome travelling in an almost incessant rain.

CHAP. IV.

Leave Vossevangen. — A Wild Duck Chase. — A heavy Penalty. — Posting Arrangements. — A roguish Scheme. — Stalheim. — Magnificent Gorge. — An apathetic Pige. — An uncomfortable Station. — Nærö Fjord. — Mode of Rowing. — Boating Chorus. — Arrival at Kaupanger.

THE comfortable quarters at Vossevangen proved so enjoyable, that it was not till midday that we found ourselves once more on the road, in the same description of conveyance in which we had arrived the night before. As we trotted along through the long, straggling, street of white houses, we had full opportunity of admiring the beautiful situation of the village. It lies in a large hollow surrounded by mountains, none of which, however, rise to any great height; while immediately before the village the Rundals Elv (*elv*, river) expands into a wide lake, the shores of which are well wooded with birch and alder. The spire of the church, forming a prominent object in the view, is well suited to the surrounding scenery.

Though we were now on the road from Bergen to Christiania, there was no traffic to denote that it was

the highway between two towns. Soon we passed by several shallow lakes, bordered with fir trees. On one of these, at a short distance from the shore, a brood of ducks was paddling about on the still waters. It immediately struck us that, in this country where meat is so scarce, a few ducks would be very acceptable; and, hastily slipping my gun from its waterproof case, I ran down to the water's edge, accompanied by the two skydskarls. But the ducks were alert to their danger, and, by this time, were far out of gunshot. A boat lay upon the green turf, drawn up out of the water. This was speedily launched, when, to our dismay, she began to fill rapidly with water, the plug-hole at the bottom of the boat being open. For a moment we were in despair; but the cork was fortunately quickly found, and the boat was pushed off from the shore. The two boys, seizing each an oar, pulled lustily away after the ducks, which flapped along over the water whenever we began to approach them. Luckily being only a half-grown brood, they did not take to flight. The ardour of the chase was intense, the boys having each of them a reward of twelve *skillings* (a *skilling* = a halfpenny) in prospect, if we should be successful, rowed most vigorously—every now and then "catching a crab," and rolling backwards in the boat; whilst I, seated in the stern, directed the young urchins which way to row, and incited them to

do their best to come up with the ducks. An exciting chase of almost a mile brought us at length within range; when, standing up in the boat, I discharged my gun, much to the dismay of the boys, immediately over their heads. Away went the ducks again, back to the other end of the lake, leaving one of their number behind. Picking up the dead bird, we were once more in full chase, and, after another very exciting row, a right and left shot secured a couple more ducks.

Further pursuit we abandoned, as we had already spent much time; so we pulled quietly back to the point whence we had started, and drawing up the boat on land returned to the stolkjœrres. Here we found an old man, who, from his manner, had evidently something to communicate. He at once began an animated conversation with the boys, apparently, from his tone of voice, on some serious subject. The boys at length explained that the old man did not intend to let us depart without having exacted a penalty for our reprehensible conduct in appropriating the boat. I replied that I was quite willing to pay the fine, and told the boys to inquire how much was demanded. Six skillings (3*d.*) he rejoined in a very deep and solemn voice, evidently considering that he was inflicting a severe penalty. The money was at once paid; and the matter being thus amicably settled, we drove off triumphantly with the ducks, for whose safety some

misgivings had been entertained during the old man's discussion.

Rain beginning to fall soon after this fresh start caused serious apprehensions as to the weather, which unfortunately were fully realised. On reaching Tvinden, the first station, about seven English miles from Vossevangen, we were much delayed from not having ordered horses beforehand, or, as it is called, sent *forbud.* Regular post-horses are kept only at *fast* stations; at all others the peasants of the adjoining district are obliged by law to furnish horses in turn, but, frequently living at some distance from the station, they are seldom able to supply the requirements of the unexpected traveller for the space of two or three hours. To avoid such detention it is customary to send the *forbud,* or notice beforehand, to inform the skydsskaffers at the different stations on what day and hour the horses will be required. When such notice has been given, the peasant whose turn it is to furnish the horses, is bound to be ready with them at the appointed time, otherwise he is subjected to a fixed penalty.

After ordering horses for proceeding to the next station, we turned to the skydskarls, and offered them what we had found to be the correct fare in the *Lomme-Reiseroute,* or Pocket Road Book, published by Government authority; but to our astonishment the boys steadily refused to accept it, on the plea that their law-

ful fare was half as much again. We showed them the book; but no, they would not allow it to be correct; and at last they appealed to a man at the station whom they affirmed to be the skydsskaffer, and whose decision would, of course, be law. Still we held out against the demand, in spite of the skydsskaffer, and at last, finding all arguments to be useless, sat down under shelter of a granary to pluck our ducks.

At last after fully two hours the horses arrived, and the boys, seeing that we could not be deceived, accepted the payment and *drikke-penge* without demur, and drove off towards Vossevangen; while we, having stowed away our baggage and covered it with the waterproof sheet to protect it from the rain, trotted away in the opposite direction. Near the station fell a pretty cascade, but the scenery was not striking though it increased in beauty as we proceeded. The road followed the course of the valley, shut in by steep birch-grown cliffs, by the side of a clear-running stream; and till within about half a mile from the station of Vinje, where a steep ascent commenced, was tolerably level.

No demur was here made in the money matters, which confirmed the justice of our decision at the last station. Fresh horses being ordered, we sought refuge in an outhouse; the abode of the skydsskaffer being far from inviting, while he himself was neither prepossessing nor obliging. Both men and horses were of

the same squalid and miserable appearance; but still the aspect of the country was not such as to induce one to suppose that poverty was the cause; for the arable land, though here, as in most parts of Norway, of limited extent, appeared to be fertile.

After a very long delay the fresh stolkjœrres were in readiness, and, paying the skydsskaffer the *tilsigelse*, or fee of four skillings for the trouble of ordering each horse, we once more started in the rain. The road now winding up the hill looked down into the valley, in the lowest depths of which the river dashed noisily along. The summit gained, we passed over high ground covered with a straggling forest of Scotch firs, and an undergrowth of juniper bushes. Emerging thence, we skirted the shores of the Opheim Vand (*vand*, a lake), by the side of which a strip of fertile land intervened between the water and the road. Innumerable Roys-ton crows were flying from tree to tree, and alighting on the sheaves of rye perched upon high poles. These birds, to judge from their tameness and abundance, seemed, like the magpies, to be generally respected.

Stalheim, the next station, not presenting a better appearance than the former ones on the road, we persuaded the drivers of the stolkjœrres to take us on to Gudvangen, in consideration of an addition to the whole fare. This station was still about eight miles distant, and, as it was already growing dark, we de-

spaired of ever reaching our destination if compelled to wait for the arrival of fresh horses. Trotting past the miserable hovels of Stalheim, we presently found ourselves at the brink of a precipitous descent, and here such scenery as we had not yet seen opened upon us.

We looked down a narrow gorge enclosed by perpendicular cliffs about two thousand feet in height: at the bottom of the valley could be traced a river winding a silvery course amongst rocks and alder-grown islands. The view seemed quite familiar to me, so vivid was the recollection of an excellent sketch by Captain — now Lieutenant-Colonel — Biddulph, R. A., in Forester's "Rambles in Norway."* Unfortunately by this time it was past nine o'clock, and too dark for seeing the magnificent scenery, except to decided disadvantage. Walking briskly on, we followed the stolkjœrres, already winding down the zigzag road by which the crossing of this otherwise impracticable barrier has been rendered only a matter of time and toil. About half-way down the hill two beautiful waterfalls fell from a considerable height, one on either side of the road; that on the left, however, presenting the grandest appearance, and throwing up a great cloud of spray which reached almost to the road.

Once more we were jolting along in the stolkjœrres,

* "Rambles in Norway," by Thomas Forester, a work well worthy of the attention of every future tourist in that country. Longman and Co., 1851.

and now over a very rough road, in many places covered with loose stones rolled down from the sides of the valley. Night closing in the journey became very tedious, owing to the wearied state of the horses. Several times, falling asleep, I woke with a start on finding myself on the verge of falling out of the cart; so that it was with great satisfaction that we at length drew up before the station of Gudvangen.

Stations almost always consist of two separate buildings, one of which is inhabited by the landlord and his family, while the other is devoted to the accommodation of travellers. Long and loud we knocked at the house of the skydsskaffer, and at length, to our joy, a window was thrown open and a female voice inquired what was wanted. In a few minutes the woman appeared at the door with a light, and, crossing the street, unlocked the door of the reception house; when, speedily settling accounts by the light of the lantern, we bade farewell, with many thanks on both sides, to the drivers of the stolkjœrres.

The *pige* (girl), as the maid-servants are called, having shown us to our rooms, prepared to depart; but the long drive had sharpened our appetites, and we were bent on obtaining some refreshment before retiring to rest. So after much difficulty we persuaded the apathetic *pige* to bring us some bread and tea. We were not detained long by our frugal supper, for

we were thoroughly wearied with our tedious journey of twelve hours, during which the small distance of twenty-eight English miles had been accomplished, at a rate of two and a quarter miles per hour.

It was extremely annoying to find on rising next morning that the pitiless rain still continued to fall, and that there was no immediate chance of an improvement in the weather. Still we were rather glad to obtain a respite from travelling, in order that our baggage might be dried before we recommenced our journey. But the *pige* would on no account provide us with a fire; so we took the law into our own hands and searched the whole house for firewood, but all that we could find were two packing-cases, which were soon broken up and blazing on the hearth. For drying our clothes the fire was much too small, but it had a great moral effect upon the *pige*, for she immediately volunteered to take our wet things to the kitchen fire in the other house—a step which hitherto she had declared to be impossible. Soon after one o'clock we sat down to dinner, which, consisting of bad fish and potatoes, together with a few sour cherries, did not augur well for the resources of the station; but the Bavarian beer being really good, it compensated, in some degree, for the defects of the more substantial part of the meal.

An hour or two afterwards we walked down to the

spot where we were to embark on the fjord. Gudvangen is situated in a narrow valley at the head of the Nærö Fjord. Perpendicular cliffs rising to a great height hem in the Nærodal, or narrow valley, which is, as its name indicates, very much contracted. Immediately in front of the station a stream of water, falling from the very summit of the cliff, forms a beautiful object in the scenery. The fjord, but a continuation of the valley, is grand and gloomy in the extreme. Close to the water's edge, in one place, a large patch of snow, a remnant of the winter, testified of the little access of the sun's rays to this narrow fjord and valley. Numbers of gulls screamed from the rocks above, while others hovered over the calm waters of the fjord, now dipping and now rising sportively in the air. Occasionally a sedate-looking individual of the coot tribe might be seen floating upon the water, which would immediately take refuge by diving down as the boat drew near.

At some distance from Gudvangen, on approaching the junction of the Aurlands Fjord, the sombre gloominess of the Nærö Fjord was exchanged for a more open and cheerful expanse of water, but not to be compared with it in grandeur and peculiarity of scenery. Here we were met by a boat on its return to Gudvangen, and the men, resting on their oars, commenced a long conversation. The Norwegians are most inveterate

talkers, and will discourse for any length of time on a very trivial subject. But these friendly chats are very trying to the patience of the traveller, especially if he happen to be pressed for time, for there is no remedy, and he must wait patiently till the natives have exhausted their conversation.

The weather now brightening up, for the first time after the three wretched days of incessant rain, produced in us a feeling of great relief. The boatmen, with the exception of an occasional halt to take a draught of sour milk from their wooden kegs, were indefatigable at their oars. Their style of rowing is very quaint, as, at the end of each stroke, they square their elbows and throw them out with a jerk; if there be two rowers, each man pulls two oars, while if, as in this case, there be three, the two in the bows pull one oar each, and the third, the "stroke," pulls a pair. Each oar has but one rowlock, through a hole in which is passed a withe, forming a loop wherein the oar is inserted and thus kept in its place. A stock of withes is always taken in the boat, so that those worn out may be at once replaced; and on a long journey a momentary halt is frequently made while a fresh withe is attached to the rowlock.

The perseverance of boatmen in Norway is quite astonishing, for they pull on in the same steady manner for any length of time: on reaching our des-

tination, after a row of about eight hours, our boatmen started at once on their return to Gudvangen, and would probably row straight home without delay. The tediousness of the rowing they sometimes beguiled by singing to the stroke of the oars: on bending forward one of the men would sing a short line suggested by the surrounding objects or present circumstances, and then, as the oars were pulled steadily through the water, all would join in the chorus of "Heigh-ho." Another would then take up the solo, and so they would continue singing in turn, all joining in the chorus together.

At eleven o'clock at night we reached the landing-place of Kaupanger on the north side of the Sogne Fjord. To a Norwegian gentleman here we had letters of introduction from my kind friends at Bergen; but the unreasonable hour of our arrival made us doubt whether we should now present ourselves at the house or not rather proceed to the little village of Amble on the other side of the bay of Kaupanger. Still the uncertainty of the means of travelling in Norway leaves much room for excuse; and, emboldened by this, and by the sight of lights yet burning in the house, we walked up from the landing-pier, and, accompanied by the three boatmen bearing our baggage, entered the garden in front of the building.

A flight of steps led up to the entrance door, through

which, as it was of glass, we looked into a room where candles were still burning. The furniture showed it to be the drawing-room; but no one was in it, and our knocking was consequently unheard. We began to despair of attracting the attention of the inmates of the house, when, shortly after one of the boatmen had gone round, as a last resource, to the back premises, a lady and two gentlemen passed through the room, to our dismay accompanied by Shot, who was strutting about and wagging his tail with delight at his new acquaintances. Revolving all the chances of the possibility of having come to the wrong house, of our arrival being unknown, and in dread of an explanation, we waited admittance to the house in doubtful anxiety. But our fears soon proved to be groundless, for the door presently opened, and so warmly were we welcomed that all misgivings were at once dispelled.

Supper was immediately ordered for us, and soon after the party broke up.

CHAP. V.

A Country House. — A Norwegian Dinner. — "Tak for Maden." — A Bear-hunter. — Sunday. — A Whale. — The Sogne Fjord. — Reach Aurdal. — Banta Stone. — Ragged Boys. — Lake Scenery. — Shot and a Goat. — Terrified Child. — Winter Food of Cattle. — A Hunter's Cottage. — Intelligent Soldier. — A Hay-loft. — Up to the Hills. — Willow-Grouse described. — Hurangerne Mountains. — Advantages of Shooting. — A Shoal of Mackerel. — Abhorrence of Eels.

ACCORDING to the invariable custom in Norway, at about six next morning, a servant brought us a cup of coffee and some biscuits, reminding me of the similar habit prevailing in some parts of Germany. But this did not preclude an excellent breakfast, at nine o'clock, consisting of cold meat cut in slices, tea, coffee, with *flad* and *kage-bröd* in plenty; while, on a plate under a bell-glass were placed a few pieces of the strong-smelling *gammel ost*, or old cheese.

In Norwegian houses, the kitchen invariably adjoins the dining-room; and, considering that the tea and coffee always remain in the kitchen, it is certainly a convenient plan for the lady of the house, who there filling the cups brings them into the dining-room,

taking them back herself to be replenished when wanted. Our new acquaintances were extremely sociable, and the breakfast passed off most pleasantly.

Soon after returning to the drawing-room, the lady of the house left us in order to superintend, in person, the cooking of the dinner and other household arrangements. The forenoon was agreeably spent, in the society of the party assembled, in conversation and music,—the lady of the house playing very well upon the pianoforte. Our host himself was absent, but amongst the persons whose acquaintance I had here the good fortune of making, was the agreeable author of a selection of Norse tales, which have been translated into English by Mr. Dasent; also a German gentleman, in whose pleasant society I afterwards passed the greater part of my time in Norway, and a young officer in the Norwegian army. During the course of the forenoon, wine and biscuits were brought into the drawing-room, when each person, filling his glass, drank to the health of all present. Wine in Norway is very good, which may be partly attributed to the lowness of the import duty.

At about two o'clock the lady of the house announced dinner by saying, "Vœr so god—spise" (Be so good as to come to dinner); upon which the guests entered the dining-room indiscriminately,—the ladies by themselves, and the gentlemen following. At a large dinner party, where some degree of formality is

observed, the wine is passed round the table, and each person fills his glass; every one then bows and drinks to the health of every one else, emptying his glass at one draught,—the neglect of which is considered as a want of respect to the master of the house, and of courtesy to the company in general: but after the first glass, wine is drunk at pleasure. This ceremony concluded, the dishes are passed round the table from one person to another; and soup and meat, being removed from the table, are generally replaced by an excellent pudding, the making of which appears to be well understood by the Norwegian ladies, and by a large dish of fruit, eaten in soup plates, with an abundance of milk. In this high latitude the profusion of raspberries, the fruit thus served up, much astonished me, till I found in what abundance they grew wild.

As each person concludes his dinner, he carefully folds up his napkin, and, laying it on the table, places his plate upon it. Every one having so done, the wine is again passed round the table, and, the glasses being all replenished, the same ceremony which preceded dinner is observed in conclusion. The move for departure from table is now made by one of the guests, a gentleman, who bowing to the host says, "*Tak for Maden*" (Thanks for the food); and the whole party then rises, and each person replaces his chair against the wall,—an accomplishment requiring some

little practice before one can not only perform it quickly, but also avoid making a great creaking upon the polished floors. A general shaking of hands immediately follows, each person saying as he does so, "*Tak for Maden.*"

All the company then proceed to the drawing-room, with the exception of the lady of the house, who remains in the dining-room to see the dinner removed. Coffee then follows, and in the evening, at about nine o'clock, an excellent supper—much like the breakfast, though more substantial. Such then is the routine and such are the customs of a Norwegian house.

After dinner the German gentleman accompanied me to the hills behind the house in search of game. The hill-side was steep and covered with forests of Scotch fir and tangled thickets of juniper and other brushwood. From a commanding height we obtained a fine view of the fjord, and by this only, and our pleasant walk, was our toil repaid; for a solitary woodcock, which we could not shoot for the thickness of the cover, was the only living thing that came across our path.

Bears here, as elsewhere in Norway, are occasionally to be met with; and indeed two had been shot in the neighbourhood by some hunters but a few weeks before my arrival. One of these peasants appeared to be a fine, bold fellow; and a story was told of him that he

once came suddenly upon a bear in the woods, but having just discharged his rifle at some other object, he was wholly unprepared for an attack. Whether man or beast first commenced the offensive I cannot recollect, but the result of the fight that ensued was, that the man was knocked down and nearly killed by the bear. "What were your thoughts," his friends asked him on his return home, "when the bear had you down on the ground and was almost killing you?" "I thought to myself," was the reply of the undaunted hunter, "what a great pleasure it would be to meet with the bear once more, when my rifle was loaded."

Next day was Sunday, but not understanding the language, we did not go to church, which was afterwards a matter of regret, as I subsequently had no opportunity of attending the service. The religion of the country is Lutheran, and the interiors of the churches much resemble those of the Lutherans in Germany.

In 1845 religious liberty was granted to all Christians, and Jews were recognised in 1851. As in the Highlands of Scotland, the population is much scattered, and the people are frequently obliged to go long distances to church.

Christianity first gained a footing in A.D. 938, under Haco, King of Norway, who had received a Christian education in England, and by whom the great heathen feast of Yule was caused to fall on Christmas-day.

Rigorous measures in favour of Christianity were enforced by Olave in 1015; but his subjects, becoming discontented, called in Canute of Denmark and England, who, on bringing Norway under the Danish rule, greatly furthered the spread of Christianity. St. Olave having been slain, and afterwards canonised, was thenceforth considered patron saint of Norway.

After dinner we sat, as usual, at the top of the flight of steps leading from the garden, sipping our coffee and enjoying the prospect. The bay of Kaupanger, connected with the main fjord by a comparatively narrow passage, is surrounded, on all sides, by high rocks clad with Scotch fir. Perpendicular cliffs beyond the wide expanse of water tower high above the fjord; on some parts of which patches of snow glittered in the bright sunshine. Numerous boats well filled with peasants gaily clad in their holiday clothes enlivened the scene; some, propelled by sturdy oarsmen, were leaving the secluded bay, and making for the open fjord; some were merely rowing to and fro, while others were crossing to the little village of Amble on the opposite side of the bay.

At one time a stream of water, spouting up into the air, betokened the presence of a whale, and, in another instant, part of his huge, dark form for a moment showed itself above the surface. Porpoises at intervals would roll along on the water, puffing and snorting as

they raised their heads; while two or three large eagles soared high overhead, and Royston crows and magpies flew from tree to tree.

On the following morning we started, a merry party, in a boat rowed by four men, for a place called Aurdal, some twenty miles up the fjord. It was a beautiful day, and the sun was lighting up the dark rocks and fir forests. Leaving the bay of Kaupanger, and emerging upon the open fjord, we kept close to the left-hand shore, where the rocks descended perpendicularly into the still waters.

The Sogne Fjord, running one hundred and twenty miles inland, is the largest in Norway: the water at Kaupanger, eighty miles from the sea, is but slightly salt; sea-weed, however, grows luxuriantly on the rocks, and salt-water fish of all kinds abound. In point of scenery it is generally reckoned inferior to the Hardanger; but, for my part, I preferred the Sogne Fjord; though, from the different state of weather in which they were seen, a comparison could not fairly be made. Both fjords, however, struck me as rather monotonous: occasional glimpses are beautiful in the extreme, but the scenery is generally deficient in background, for the cliffs, rising perpendicularly to a great height, bar all view of mountains beyond.

Several seals were seen on the way, but they were all swimming at great distances, and quickly dived

down as our bullets whizzed past them; and now and then a porpoise would come to the surface for a moment, give a puff, and then disappear.

Some time after passing the point where the Lyster Fjord (*lyster*, a leister) diverges, we reached a few houses by the water-side, and there disembarked to make a second breakfast of the provisions which had been brought in the boat, concluding it with some ripe, though sour, fruit from the cherry trees, beneath the shade of which we were seated. The hill-sides had here been almost entirely cleared of their fir forests—the fjord greatly facilitating the means of export—and here and there saw-mills, turned by water power, were quickly cutting up the remaining timber on hand.

At about one in the afternoon we reached Aurdal, and walked up to the station-house, where, before making further arrangements, we ascertained that there was sufficient accommodation for our party of six. The skydsskaffer, a dark-haired, sharp-featured man, with twinkling black eyes, was extremely obliging in affording us all the information in his power about shooting. Our hopes were much incited by the news that reindeer were abundant on the neighbouring mountains, and we heard that a peasant had, but a few days previously, killed four deer in one day—a success quite unknown in reindeer stalking. But this hunter had met with extraordinary luck, having killed

three of the deer at one shot, the bullet striking the third after passing through the others. It was, therefore, determined to repair at once to Nundal, where this peasant resided, and consult him on the subject of reindeer-hunting.

At a station there is usually a shop kept by the skydsskaffer, which, being probably the only one of a district, is furnished with a very heterogeneous mixture of goods. Clocks, guns, kid gloves, tea, coffee, tobacco, and snuff were all to be purchased; coloured pocket-handkerchiefs printed with the charge of Balaklava, battle of Inkerman, and the Thames Tunnel were conspicuously displayed; while pocket-knives were countless, — all marked Sheffield, though probably German counterfeits. But worsted stockings of genuine native manufacture were the sole articles which took my fancy.

Upon the opposite side of the river, which here fell into the fjord, stood a tall *Bauta* stone, or monument erected, according to the doctrines of Odin, to the memory of some departed hero. Following the course of this river, we walked to a lake about a mile distant, where we had obtained permission to fish — fishing, unlike shooting, being all private property. Several peasants were unsuccessfully flogging the river for salmon, whose example one of our party followed with the same result.

The banks of the river, especially near the outlet from the lake, presented much the appearance of a railway cutting, and seemed to be composed of a loose shingly earth. I observed a similar cutting at Skjolden, on the Lyster Fjord, also at the outlet of a lake. It may not be impossible that the large mass of land between the lake and the fjord has been deposited, in a great measure, by the river itself, as it is now doing at its inlet; and that this deposit, at last becoming too high for the water of the lake to flow over, was cut through by the river, which thus formed the existing channel with escarped sides.

Several boat-houses stood by the shores of the lake, and drawn up on the beach lay a couple of boats, in charge of two untidy-looking boys, very ragged in dress, and whose general appearance did not indicate prosperity. The character of the people, however, I fear, was more to blame than the land, for the natives of Aurdal seemed to be particularly indolent and apathetic. Well-worn, indeed threadbare, round jackets, knee-breeches, woollen stockings, very primitively made shoes abounding in holes, and a blue worsted night-cap, such as is worn by the men of the upper parts of the Sogne Fjord, composed the attire of these two boys.

Embarking in our boats, we started on a trout-fishing expedition, being well provided with trawling-

lines. Several strong trawling and an ample supply of night-lines are the most useful description of tackle on which to depend for a supply of fish, if one does not give up one's time to angling. To me, who had no line to attend to, the scenery was the object of attraction. Towering high aloft, the rocks rose out of the green water, and the sun, already fast declining, threw the western mountains into dark shade, while it lighted up the opposite precipices. The impression of the superiority of lake over fjord scenery was still more strengthened, and, without hesitation, I should give the preference to the mountain lakes. Several trout being captured, we returned to the station, where the newly-caught fish afforded us an excellent supper.

A steady pour of rain next morning was a great disappointment to the German gentleman and myself, who had planned an excursion to Nundal to see the reindeer hunter. For some time we sat watching the sky, in hopes that the weather would soon clear; but no signs of amendment being visible, we repaired to the lake to trawl for trout, as a shooting excursion for the present was out of the question.

On landing, after tolerable success, the Norwegian officer and I, to pass the time before dinner, scrambled up the mountains by the side of a rushing stream. One is sometimes seized, amongst mountains, with an indescribable desire to see how great a height may be

reached within a certain time, and, thus impelled, we pushed on over the broken ground forming the foot of the mountain before us. At last, having reached the highest point that time would allow, a glimpse of the snowy peaks of the Hurungerne Mountains, once considered the loftiest in Norway, rewarded our toil; and appearing, as they did, behind the mountains which enclosed the lake, they added greatly to the grandeur of the scene.

Turning at last towards home, we scrambled down over rocks and stones and across the dry bed of a stream, which, to judge from the multitude of smooth-worn rocks and the size of the channel, must be a formidable torrent at the time of the melting of snow. Shot, who was with us, disappeared from sight on approaching a few cottages on the hill-side, and presently we heard the cries of some animal in distress. Directed by the sounds I made for the cottages, near which on a potato-bed lay a poor young goat whose neck Shot was biting and shaking in a most savage manner. As the unfortunate kid was just expiring, I ran after my companion and called him back. We were deliberating about what could be done by way of redress to the owner of the kid, when the door of the cottage slightly opened, and the terrified countenance of a small child appeared through the crack. Gradually it gained courage, and at last ventured to

trust itself outside the door; but all that could be elicited from it concerning how the affair had happened was the plaintive whimper, "Han sprang so stark!" (he sprang so fiercely). Further information it could not give us, having no doubt retreated to the house in a panic at the first onset. However, we ascertained that the child's parents were not at home, so, after saying that we would make compensation if the owners would come to the station, we left the cottage. Half a dollar, or 2*s.* 3*d.*, was the amount which they afterwards claimed as damage.

The station was regained in good time for dinner. Trout, red-fleshed, and with a slight flavour of salmon, formed the first course, which was replaced by a hash of reindeer venison. After dinner the German gentleman and I made preparations for a start to Nundal, as the weather had now cleared up.

Our baggage having been packed, and an old woman, in default of any abler person, hired to assist in carrying the packages to the lake, we started on our journey, full of hopes for the following day. The poor woman nearly succumbed by the way, causing almost all her share of the burden to be added to our own. Engaging one of the boys at the lake to row us to the other end, we embarked in the boat. One trout was captured by the way with the trawling-lines, and had not a large fish carried away the hook,

we might have been further successful. Ample occupation was afforded to one of us in baling out the water, which, whenever the boat lurched, rushed into it in torrents through a crack in the side.

Several boats were passed laden with piled-up faggots of green branches, on the top of which, in one of them, was perched a goat; other boats were moored to the rocks, while their owners were employed in stripping the birch trees of their branches, to be used as food for cattle during the winter months. After rowing for about three hours we reached the place where we were to disembark, when, to our disappointment, we found that the cottage of the reindeer hunter was at some distance from the lake, and, worse still, that there was a long and steep hill to ascend to it. Not having been aware of this when we started from Aurdal, we had brought more baggage than we should otherwise have done. Rifle and gun, spare powder and shot, waterproof sheet, blanket, and knapsack with provisions, fell to my lot, while the others were equally well laden.

A rugged path, very precipitous and covered with loose stones, led up the steep valley of Nundal. Not being yet in good walking condition we felt the ascent very fatiguing, and were glad at last to reach a couple of dilapidated houses, one of which belonged to the reindeer hunter. The other cottage was owned by a

non-commissioned officer in the army, whom, it was said, we should find a very intelligent and obliging person. A few outhouses stood round, the lower parts of which were fitted up as stables for cattle, while the lofts were filled with hay.

Some children who were standing about told us that the reindeer hunter was absent from home, and that the soldier was busy in his hay-field, but that it would not be long before he returned. Entering into the hunter's house we sat down, and awaited patiently the return of the hay-making soldier. There was one spacious room, the walls and ponderous beams of which were well browned with smoke. A diminutive window admitted but a dim light, and an ordinary box-bed, a long table, and one or two wooden stools composed the furniture. The general arrangements showed untidiness, and altogether our prospects for the night were not the most hopeful.

By degrees, as the rumour of the presence of two strangers spread about, the room began to fill with men, women, and children, who stood round us in groups gazing in mute astonishment. All our actions were watched with intense curiosity, and guns, rifles, and other baggage were minutely examined, so soon as our permission had been obtained. But the interest became almost excitement when we commenced a commercial transaction with one woman who carried a basket of

potatoes on her arm; and, immediately the bargain was struck, the spectators burst from a breathless silence into a general buzz of criticism.

After a time the soldier returned from the hay-field. He was a fine, strongly-built, man, but little under six feet in height: bright dark eyes, and a lively smile, showed him at once to be far above the generality of the inhabitants of this district, both in intelligence and education; and, in fact, he would be a very superior man of his class in any country. He appeared to be delighted to see us, and immediately brought us into his own house, when he forthwith began a very animated conversation. The object of our arrival was, naturally enough, his first inquiry, after which he was anxious to know who I was, and also the reasons of my visiting Norway, and seemed to take it as a great compliment when I replied, that I had come to see the country. Conversation then turned upon politics, and upon the general movements of the European states; and we had the satisfaction of being the first to inform him of the battle of Solferino.

But night was now drawing on, and the trout, which we had caught on the way, together with some of the newly-bought potatoes, was hung over the fire to boil; and tea having been made, we soon sat down to supper. In the course of the evening the reindeer hunter, a moderately tall man, with the usual light hair, entered

the cottage. Unlike our host, he was heavy-looking and apathetic, seeming to be almost unconscious of anything that was going on. It was difficult to believe that this individual with immovable countenance could have sufficient energy to pursue the wild reindeer among snowy mountains. Yet such was the case: and no inexpert hunter he was said to be, and the very man who, but a short time previously, had shot four reindeer in one day.

We found him, as his countenance suggested, not very communicative; and, after exchanging a few words, we produced our guns and rifles, hoping thereby, as Norwegian peasants are much interested in fire-arms, to rouse him from his apathy. But the effect which they caused was not one of ecstacy, as is generally the case; for he subsided into a state of perfect stupor, and all his faculties of speech, hearing, and understanding seemed to vanish.

But as it was now quite dark we commenced making preparations for the night. My friend had brought with him a hammock, which he suspended by means of hooks screwed into the log-built walls of the house. A bed was offered to me, but a good airy couch amongst the hay in one of the outhouses had greater attractions to me than the close and ill-ventilated room. The trunk of a tree, with deep notches cut in it and much resembling the ladder up to a roosting-place of poultry,

gave access to a spacious loft full of hay, with which and one or two rugs a very comfortable bed was made.

Soon after daylight we were all astir and busy getting breakfast ready; after which, accompanied by our host, we started with our guns for the mountains in search of willow-grouse. The soldier was not confident in the hopes of finding many birds, though he said that in the winter time there was usually a great abundance; and that, at the time of the snow falling, it was sometimes difficult to tell whether the hills were white with snow or with willow-grouse.

All idea of an expedition after reindeer had been abandoned, as further information showed us that more time would be required than we could spare, and also that our preparations were by no means sufficient.

A rough and steep walk of about a couple of hours brought us to near the limit of the birch trees, at which elevation willow-grouse are met with. A steady point from Shot showed that birds were at hand, and in another instant a large covey rose and flew off with a great flurry and croaking. Unfortunately we were scarcely prepared, and only one bird fell; but Shot soon found the others among the dwarf or mountain willows (*Salix mirsinites*) on the hill-side, and "the bag" was quickly increased to seven.

The willow-grouse is a most beautiful bird, of about the same size as the red-grouse of Scotland. During

the winter months the plumage is of a pure white, but in summer the head and breast are of a reddish hazel-brown, while the wings are *partly* white and the rest of the body is interspersed with white feathers. When disturbed it utters a hoarse croaking, similar to, though much more frog-like than, the call of the red grouse. The mountains, about the limit of the birch tree, an altitude just at this part of about 2600 feet, are the resort of this bird, and it is seldom found much below the limit of the fir tree.

The ptarmigan, on the other hand, frequents those parts of the mountains which are above the limit of all shrubs, whence it is called *Fjeld*-rype, mountain-grouse (Lagopus *alpinus*), while the willow-grouse is called *Skov*-rype, wood-grouse (Lagopus *sub*-alpinus). The food of the latter bird I found to be whortleberries, &c., and the young leaves of the mountain willow. It appears to be more plentiful than the ptarmigan, and, from its frequenting lower regions, is more easily obtained. In winter the natives shoot them with rifles, as they lie half buried in the snow.

There cannot be the least doubt of the willow-grouse and ptarmigan being distinct birds, for their plumage and habits are so entirely different; but whether the *red* and willow-grouse be identical seems still scarcely decided. Short, thick bill, stouter tarsi, white wings, and difference of eggs are the chief points of distinction.

For my part, although all the old birds which came under my notice had only *partially* white wings, I should incline to the opinion of the species being distinct. It might be worth while, in those parts of Scotland where the red-grouse have suffered much from the disease, to give the willow-grouse a trial, as it affords very good sport.

Though our expectations of game were scarcely fulfilled, there was no reason for discontent at the long toil up the mountain, for the view alone amply repaid all trouble and exertion. The sun, shining brightly, gave a cheerful appearance to the lake and fjord below, as well as warmth to the yellow-green reindeer moss; which though but thinly scattered over the otherwise perfectly bare rocks, seemed from a distance to be spread in a uniform carpet, imparting to the whole scene a beautiful, but very wild and peculiar, colouring.

A dense mist, which the sun as yet seemed unable to disperse, covered the more distant mountains, depriving us of the most important features of the scenery. The sharp, fantastic-shaped, summits of the snow-clad Hurungerne were thus enveloped; and, though one peak for an instant revealed their position, the gathering clouds which, driven by the western wind, rolled ever onwards, quickly excluded it from our view.

To me, as we gazed upon the grand country around, and inhaled the invigorating breeze, the pursuit of

game, by which a person is led to the enjoyment of such superb scenery amongst untraversed and unexplored regions, and is thrown into close contact with the peasantry of the country, appeared to have unbounded attractions. The angler, detained in the valley by the river-side, loses that ever-changing variety of scene, which, in a mountain country, is so enchanting. But still less enviable is the life of the ordinary *tourist*, who, going conscientiously through the routine laid down in his guide-book, but seldom deviates from the beaten track.

After leaving the ground where the first willow-grouse had been found, fortune did not favour us; a woodcock, the only one which I saw in Norway, was flushed, but unluckily missed. At about ten o'clock we began to retrace our steps, for the boy had been ordered to be at Nundal with the boat at about mid-day.

A second breakfast on our return was very acceptable, after which we bade *farvel* to our host, with many thanks for his kindness, at the same time adding a small present. A long and tedious row, owing to the wind blowing strongly against us, brought us once more to Aurdal. Here we found but one of the party remaining, the others having left in the forenoon.

By six in the evening we were on our way back to Kaupanger. Fortunately the wind had subsided, and

the evening was lovely, though as midnight drew on it became very cold. A seal came up close to the boat, but quickly dived down again as a bullet was hurriedly sent after it. Shortly before midnight, as we entered the Bay of Kaupanger, the lights of the Sogne Fjord steamer were seen down the fjord, and soon after our arrival at the landing-pier she came steaming into the bay to Amble. By this steamer my English friend left me on his return to England, having only a limited time at his disposal. Proceeding by water to Lœrdalsören he crossed the Fille Fjeld, and pursued the high road to Christiania.

The two following days were very pleasantly spent beneath the most hospitable roof of Kaupanger. One morning, just after breakfast, there was a great stir among the boatmen, who were putting off in their skiffs in all haste and making towards one part of the bay. They had seen a shoal of fish, for soon we observed them letting out the nets; and, hurrying along the water's edge, we arrived at the scene of bustle and activity in good time to see the nets brought ashore. The fish were mackerel, and, though very small, were in immense numbers. As soon as the net had reached shallow water, the fish were ladled out with large scoop-shovels into boats, and three or four were filled almost to the gunwale before the net was emptied. Several fine eels also were taken, and these

were willingly handed over to the German gentleman and myself, the Norwegians holding this excellent fish in such abhorrence, that even if on the point of starvation they would scarcely eat one.

Once or twice I went along the shore of the fjord with my rifle in hopes of securing a seal, but beyond a few porpoises, which afforded some amusement at long ranges, nothing was seen.

CHAP. VI.

Departure from Kaupanger. — Norwegian Ponies. — Forests. — Ferry-boats. — Terraces. — A Salmon River. — The Lyster Fjord. — A dreaded Storm. — Skjolden. — Pack-saddles. — Start for the Sogne Fjeld.—A wild Valley.— Farm-house of Oftun.—A Reindeer Hunter. — Hurungerne Mountains.—Definition of a Fjeld.— Colouring of the Scenery.— Perils of the Fjeld in Winter.— Ski, or Snow-Skates.— Smörstab Bræen. — Roaming Ponies.— Bœvertun Sœters.—A happy Mistake. — Log-built Sœters. — A short Bed. — Inquisitive Pige.

THE afternoon of the 13th of August was fixed for the departure from Kaupanger, but, though my English friend had quitted me, it was not my destiny to travel alone for the future.

Our kind host of Kaupanger, being obliged to leave home shortly before my arrival, had requested his German visitor to postpone his journey to his native land, in order to do the honours of the house to me. To this proposal he had not only assented, but before my departure had most kindly suggested that we should go together to the fjelds on a reindeer-hunting excursion. This was indeed most acceptable to me, and I felt deeply the extreme kindness of my friend; for he was thus entirely altering his own plans, deferring his journey to Germany for almost a whole

month, and disappointing his friends and relations who were already awaiting his arrival. Indelibly impressed upon me this act of kindness will ever remain.

But, though about to start on such a pleasant expedition, it was with great feelings of regret that I bade farewell to a house where my reception had been attended with such unrivalled kindness and hospitality. Though a perfect stranger on arrival, I already felt as if my acquaintance had been of much longer duration, and as though a year, rather than a week, had been spent at Kaupanger.

Thick mists covered the hills when we started, and our original plan of going over the mountains to Solvorn was abandoned, and mounting our two ponies we followed the road in company with the stolkjœrre which conveyed our baggage. One of the ponies, that belonging to my companion, was a very handsome animal, and a good specimen of the Norwegian cream-coloured breed, found to greatest perfection in this Sogne Fjord district. It stood about thirteen hands, was strongly framed, and very powerful about the shoulder; its tail and hog-mane were almost black, and dark stripes like those on a zebra marked its legs. In the more eastern parts of the country the ponies are chiefly bay, and many of them are much larger, but the cream-coloured breed is to be preferred in point of strength and hardiness.

Thirty dollars, about 7*l.* English money, should be the maximum price for a good pony in this part of Norway. The peasants, however, not unfrequently ask much more than that sum, and sometimes even three times the value of the animal, from the absurd idea that a foreigner, of whatsoever country, will pay without hesitation the price demanded. Horses in Norway can seldom be used excepting as beasts of burden, to work in the fields, or occasionally to draw a sledge or carriole; and hunting or any such sport requiring particularly good horses being impossible from the nature of the country, it follows that fancy prices are absurd.

Soon after passing the quaint wooden church of Kaupanger we plunged into a dense forest of Scotch fir. The trees were all comparatively young, and consequently of inconsiderable size; large trees, if I am not mistaken, are seldom met with in this part of Norway—in fact, not till the confines of Sweden are approached. These woods through which we were passing were all private property; but a large proportion of the forests belongs to the crown.

The road being so shut in with trees was rather gloomy and monotonous, and a great delight it was to emerge once more into open country, the more so as it now became very beautiful. For some distance we skirted the edge of a precipice overhanging

the Eide Fjord, a small branch of the Sogndal Fjord. A bright sunshine was penetrating the dense fir woods which clothed the hills, and dispelling the mists which had hitherto floated around their summits; while a small boat, propelled by some gaily-clad women, broke the calm stillness of the pale green waters which glittered below us.

Continuing along the very brink of the precipice the road, in one place, turned sharply, almost at right angles; and, there being no protection on the outer side, nothing would be easier, on a dark night, than to go straight on and fall over into the fjord below. Such dangerous places are not unfrequently met with on the by-roads (*bivei*) of Norway. It was indeed but a short distance beyond this that, about a year previously, a serious accident occurred. An old lady was thrown out of her carriage, and, her head coming in severe contact with a rock by the road-side, she was killed on the spot.

On arriving opposite to the village of Sogndal the road came to an abrupt termination, and, being continued on the other side of the fjord, it was necessary to cross over in the ferry. A woman and a boy had come out of a cottage by the water-side as we approached, and were already making preparations for conveying us across. The craft in which we were to embark was not built, as English ferry-boats are, with

flat shelving bows and stern to run up on land and allow the carriages or carts to be drawn in; but it was merely a large boat of the ordinary construction though rather broader and flatter than usual.

After sundry evolutions it was brought alongside the landing-place, and, by the united efforts of men, woman, and boy, the stolkjœrre was lifted into it: the ponies then, having been led down to the water, stepped in like human beings; and when both ponies and cart had been arranged in the boat we pulled away for the opposite side of the fjord. As the boat grounded on the beach the ponies stepped out into the water and walked to the shore; after which the stolkjœrre was dragged over the side, landing on the ground with such a tremendous bump that we thought it must be broken to pieces. However it was not much hurt, but it was curious to see with what indifference the driver of the stolkjœrre looked upon the damage. Inanimate articles are treated with very little respect in Norway, and, as my companion used justly to remark, "For travelling in Norway everything should be made of iron."

The traveller among the fjords and along the sea-coast of Norway, is often struck by the appearance of military earthworks; and indeed I—not the first who has done so—inquired on one occasion whether they were fortifications. Such level terraces with sloping faces towards the water I observed here and

also at Sandvig, and along the western coast they are of frequent occurrence.

At Sogndal resides an Englishman, who, by all accounts, appears to be rather a character. On speculation he has hired the salmon fishing in the river, and has determined to leave it undisturbed for two whole years, at the expiration of which time he expects that the river will be swarming with fish, and that he will then be able to let it to Englishmen at a very remunerative profit. At present the result is that, as he does not catch the fish himself, other people do so instead.

Continuing by the water-side to the extremity of the fjord, the road crossed a bridge over a roaring torrent and wound up a long and steep zigzag ascent. The deciduous trees, mostly aspen-poplar and birch, had been stripped of all the branches within reach, which, bound up into faggots, were lying by the road-side preparatory to being carried away and stored up as food for cattle during the winter.

Reaching the summit of the ascent we travelled through fir woods, but soon emerged into an open valley, and passing by the side of a lake struck off to the east down a wide gorge which brought us ultimately to Solvorn, a large village prettily situated by the shores of a bay of the Lyster Fjord.

The station was very comfortable, though not abound-

ing in articles of food: bread, cheese, and eggs being the only eatables. Raspberries, which we had found so plentiful at Kaupanger, were not yet ripe at Solvorn, —a good instance of the influence of locality on plants, for this village was only seventeen miles from Kaupanger by the very circuitous route by which we had come.

The following day, Sunday, was spent at Solvorn. A bright sunshine and the tempting appearance of the fjord led me along the rocky shore in search of a good bathing-place. As I proceeded, fresh beauties of the scenery opened to view; and altogether the Lyster Fjord—the finest I have seen—made a very favourable impression upon me. At last a spot was chosen where the rocks dipped abruptly into the water; but a hidden rock in this very bay having been the cause of the damage to the steamer which we saw at Bergen gave me some misgivings lest my head should meet with a similar fate as I plunged into the water.

At about nine o'clock in the evening a large boat with four rowers was in readiness to take us to Skjolden at the extremity of the fjord; and, as soon as the baggage and pony had been placed on board, we put off from the pier of Solvorn. A quantity of hay had been placed at the bottom of the boat; but unfortunately for us, to whom a good night's rest was a matter of much importance as we had a long day over the Sogne

Fjeld in prospect, our couch was very hard and uncomfortable.

The night was extremely warm, quite unnaturally so indeed; and soon dark clouds began to gather overhead, while, at intervals, hot blasts of wind came rushing down from the western mountains. Immediately to the westward lay the immense glacier of Justedal—the most extensive in Norway—which, the wind having to traverse it, rendered the hot blasts the more remarkable.

These signs of an approaching storm, though regarded by the boatmen with a stolid indifference, excited in us considerable apprehensions, as we greatly feared that an outburst of wrath from the glowering heavens would suddenly come upon us. By dint of persuasion we at last succeeded in making the boatmen keep close to the shore; and, in case a violent storm should burst upon us, the pony was untied so that no delay might be occasioned in pitching the poor animal overboard and allowing him to make the best of his way to the shore.

That half-hour, during which the storm seemed undecided whether or not to vent its fury upon us, was a time of much anxiety; but gradually the dark clouds drifted away towards the south, and, the force of the wind abating, the fjord became once more calm. During the whole time that the wind was blowing, though the boat pitched considerably, the pony had remained perfectly quiet. From the constant necessity, however, of

transporting ponies over water, these sagacious creatures are almost as much at home in a boat as on land.

Three o'clock in the morning brought us safely to Skjolden, the weather having much retarded our progress and delayed our arrival by at least one hour. Skjolden is a lovely spot at the very extremity of the Lyster Fjord — the furthest inlet of the great Sogne Fjord — and the sun, as it rose over the eastern hills, rendered the whole scene one of enchanting beauty. The boat was run ashore by the mouth of a wide river, and the pony and baggage were at once landed. Soon after, the men and horses which had been ordered by *forbud* appeared upon the opposite bank, and presently the men crossed over in a boat, leaving the ponies to swim the river after them.

While preparations were being made for our departure an amusing deliberation was held by the boatmen who had brought us from Solvorn. As we were both foreigners they not unnaturally concluded that we could not understand their conversation. But a residence of almost a year in the country had rendered my friend perfectly familiar with the Norse language, and the whole consultation was overheard. Having been paid their fare together with *drikke-penge* they were now anxious to raise a pretext for obtaining more money. First one scheme was proposed and then another; but none seemed to be generally approved of till one man suggested

that payment should be claimed for the use of the blankets or rugs, which, by the by, are always included with the boat. The case was forthwith represented with great flow of language, but without avail; for if any doubts had by chance existed as to the lawfulness of the claim they would have been cleared up by the overhearing of the plot.

In the mean time the peasants were packing the baggage, an operation which, from their utter disregard of the damage to the packages resulting from rough treatment, required all our care and attention. Two pack-horses and a guide were in attendance according to our directions; the skydsskaffer too, in eager expectation of his *tilsigelse* of 8 skillings for ordering the horses, did not absent himself. A tall, uncouth, native of the wilds he was, clad in ragged coat, leather knee-breeches, and green worsted nightcap.

The pack-saddles (*klövsadel*) of Norway are curious contrivances, so much so that they have been shown at the Paris exhibitions; and the method of packing the baggage is also peculiar. The *klöv*, in which, or on which rather, the goods to be transported are stowed, consists of a stout stick bent into the shape of a horse-shoe, and is thus retained by two or three withes stretching from one side to the other, and forming at the same time a kind of net-work between the sides: to this stick are attached, at intervals, other withes of

about two feet long, with loops at the end, through which is passed a long stout cord, usually made of cow's hair. This cord, when all the baggage has been laid upon the net-work between the sides of the horse-shoe-formed stick, is pulled tight, thereby drawing the withes together over the baggage, and enclosing it in a net which completely secures it. The *klöv*, having all been packed, were hooked one to each side of a pony, being suspended to the saddle-trees by two loops of withe; a cow's-hair cord then secured the packs together and made them fast to the horse, while another was passed round the chest of the horse to prevent the packs slipping off behind. The whole arrangement being then complete, the caravan moved on.

But before quitting this spot, it was impossible not to cast one last look at the grand Lyster Fjord, resplendent with the rays of the rising sun which was already shedding a soft, but cold, pink light upon the dark-frowning cliffs overhanging the still waters of the fjord. It seemed almost a dream that, but a few hours previously, we had been tossed about by the angry winds upon those very waters now so calm and peaceful.

Following the rugged path we plunged into the depths of the valley along which the Fortuns Elv rolled its rapid stream, and the gorgeous scenery of the fjord was at once hidden from our view. The

edge of a precipice overhanging a rock-bound lake was now skirted, but soon descending to the grassy flats we pursued our course by the river-bank, now crossing rapid streams rushing down from the cliffs, now threading our way through thickets of alder bushes. Soon after passing the hamlet of Fortun we quitted the river, and, turning eastwards, climbed a rocky winding ascent, which led up the steep defile to the fjelds above. Already we began to feel that we were leaving the habitable regions — the valley grew more and more desolate, and a roaring torrent, dashing impetuously down, increased the wildness of the scene.

At about eight o'clock we arrived at the farm-house of Oftun, where fresh horses were to supply the place of those from Skjolden, distant about seven English miles. But the men and ponies which had been bespoken had returned home, as, on account of the weather, and the delay caused in packing at Skjolden, we were two hours behind our time. The owners of the ponies asking for an hour's preparation, we determined to avail ourselves of the halt to make a comfortable breakfast at the farm-house.

Our host, Oftun — for, as in Scotland, the Norwegians assume the name of their property — was a tall young man with a pleasant, frank, expression of countenance. Like all other peasants, he was eager

to learn our whole history, who we were, whence we had come, and whither we were going. With our fire-arms he was much interested, inspecting each one carefully and expressing his opinion as to the workmanship; for the peasants of Norway, being generally their own gunmakers, look at guns and rifles with the eye of a *connoisseur*. Breakfast was prepared in a large room to which one ascended by a staircase outside the house: bread, butter, eggs, and coffee were provided by Oftun, to which we added two or three reindeer tongues.

When the ponies arrived we descended to arrange about the price to be paid, and also to superintend the packing of our baggage. Oftun not being a station, the peasants were not under any compulsion for supplying horses, and, consequently, no fixed rate of payment existed. But a bargain was soon satisfactorily concluded, and five dollars, equal to about 1*l.* 3*s.*, were stipulated upon as the sum which we should pay for two ponies and one man as far as Kvandesvold, a farm-house distant about two and thirty English miles. This, considering that the time occupied in going and returning would be the best part of four days, was very reasonable. The peasants, however, endeavoured to increase the charge by trying to persuade us that *two* men would be required as guides, but this we declined, as my friend, having

crossed the Sogne Fjeld before, knew it to be unnecessary.

Besides our guide, a youth of about eighteen, we were accompanied by an old man, a native of the other side of the fjeld, who, being on his return home, had begged permission to cross with us, which was readily complied with. He seemed to be quite a character, though but few words escaped his lips. Clad in a long great-coat, with a broad-brimmed "wide-awake" on his head, and a big cotton umbrella with a large hook at the handle end under his arm, he trudged along at a sure and steady pace, apparently in deep meditation.

Leaving Oftun, the path continued up the valley, increasing gradually in ruggedness and steepness of ascent. The last habitation had been left behind, and the valley became wild and desolate in the extreme. As we toiled upwards we were met by a man and a pony coming down from the fjeld. Cut up and bound in the *klövsadel* of his rough mountain pony was the carcase of a reindeer. The head and branching antlers surmounted the whole pack, and the meeting of the two parties in this wild and rocky region was exceedingly picturesque.

Still we continued to ascend, and soon the dwarf willow and next the juniper were the only shrubs to be seen among the rocks. But these bushes, in their turn,

as we scrambled upwards, were left below, and the scene became one of perfect dreariness and desolation, and large piles of stones marked out the almost untrodden path.

The summit of the northern side of the valley was gained at eleven o'clock, and at last we found ourselves fairly on the Sogne Fjeld.

Pausing awhile we looked back upon the grand scenery. Far below down the valley glittered the beautiful Lyster Fjord, but a scene of much greater magnificence greeted our eyes as we looked towards the opposite side of the valley. There, immediately before us, rose the gigantic Hurungerne Mountains. Extensive glaciers, sparkling with intense brilliancy in the rays of the resplendent sun, covered the less precipitous parts of the mountains. In majestic grandeur dark masses of rock shot up out of the icy fields in fantastic and jagged peaks. Not a vestige of snow clothed their precipitous sides, and their dark forms stood out in bold relief against the clear blue sky and dazzling snow-fields.

One of these peaks, the Skagstöls-Tind, was for some time considered to be the loftiest peak in Norway, having displaced Snehætten, on the Dovre Fjeld from its position of honour: the Skagstöls-Tind has, however, been surpassed by the Galhöpiggene, some miles to the eastward, which rises to a height of 8300 Norsk, or 8540 English feet.

But the prospect of traversing this lonely fjeld for twenty-five English miles before reaching the first habitation would not allow us to linger in raptured contemplation of those majestic peaks and glittering fields of ice; and, with feelings of regret, we tore ourselves away and toiled onwards over the barren rocks.

A fjeld has been represented as a *plateau*, or "table-topped mountain," and also as being one of the peculiarities of the mountains of Norway; and I was therefore disappointed in not finding anything very striking in the appearance of the Sogne Fjeld. The large extent of table-land is certainly one of the most characteristic features of the country, but the traveller is mistaken when he applies to these *plateaux* the *specific* name of *fjeld*. For long I did not discover the meaning of the word, but at last, on hearing it so frequently applied in complete variance with the idea of its being a table-land, I asked for a definition of the word, and was told that in the term *fjeld* is included *every part of a mountainous region which, from its elevation, is entirely devoid of shrubs or bushes of any sort*. At the same time I was also practically shown what was, and what was not, a *fjeld*.

The manner too in which the word is employed in the Amts Karte, or Ordnance Maps, rather tends to contradict a *fjeld* meaning a table-land. For instance, in one of the sheets we find in the table of altitudes Svart-

dalspiggen Fjeld (*pig-gen*, the point) 6970 feet; Nautgardstinden Fjeld (*tind-en*, the peak) 7390 feet. It is obvious that the highest point of a mountain cannot be a peak and a *plateau* at the same time. It must be borne in mind, however, that, though a *fjeld* does not signify a table-land, a table-land is not thereby debarred from being a *fjeld*; and indeed a *fly*—a *perfectly level* tract of frequent occurrence on the high mountains—is generally a *fjeld*. The word *fell* in Westmorland and Cumberland is evidently the same as *fjeld*, having no doubt been imported by the Northmen.

On we toiled in straggling file now climbing, now descending, ridges of rock, now crossing patches of snow, and now skirting the edge of ice-covered tarns (Scan. *tjörn*, or *tjarn*). In about an hour, the peaks of the Hurungerne were hidden from view by a projecting shoulder of rock, and for a time we wandered on with no particular object of interest to attract the attention. The colouring of the country at this elevation, perhaps about 4700 feet, is extremely peculiar. The lichen, popularly termed reindeer-moss, clothing the light gray rocks of gneiss, imparts to the scenery a tint varying so much between green and yellow that an exact description of the idea it conveys is almost impossible.

At about one o'clock we halted in a sheltered hollow formed by the surrounding rocks. The ponies, when relieved of their packs, were allowed to wander about at liberty in search of food, and we, producing some

provisions from one of the packs, sat down to our mid-day meal. The eels, which we had brought cooked from Kaupanger, together with bread, and butter carried in a small wooden box, constituted our repast; while the two peasants had recourse to their stock of flad-bröd and cheese.

In point of scenery no better spot could have been chosen: for immediately before us, at the distance of about a couple of miles, lay immense glaciers, the white surface of which was broken by the numerous *crevasses* or fissures, while the outline was beautifully marked by the deep green of the fractured ice.

The mountain and glacier before us suggested a conversation concerning the perils of crossing the fjeld in winter time. Though frequently attended with success, my friend having himself traversed it in the month of February, the length of the passage from habitation to habitation, about eighteen hours in the winter time, renders it a somewhat hazardous undertaking if the weather be not settled; and many is the life that has been lost in the attempt. But a few years ago, beneath the very mountain which towered before us, a party of twelve peasants were overtaken by a heavy snow-storm, and all found a cold and miserable grave.

For crossing the fjeld in winter time *ski* (pronounced *she*), or snow-skates, are made use of. These are long pieces of wood, as much as ten or twelve feet

in length, in breadth but little wider than the foot, and turned up at either end to prevent their sticking into the snow; they are attached to the foot in a very simple manner by a withe or a leather strap. "The motion," says Mr. Lloyd, "is of a gliding nature, and, excepting as regards rapidity, something of the nature of the skate in common use with us in England." "With every advantage a man on *ski* does not usually proceed at a much greater rate than a fast walker." Unlike the snow-shoes of North America they can only be used when the surface of the snow has been sufficiently frozen to bear the weight of a person without giving way. In descending a hill a person with *ski* may go very fast, but in ascending it is necessary to "tack," like a ship beating up against the wind.

Nothing is more striking than the feeling, constantly impressed upon one while travelling over the fjelds of Norway, of the necessity of always pushing onwards lest the quarters for the night should not be reached before dark. Soon therefore the packs were replaced on the ponies and our caravan once more continued its course. The coldest and most dreary part of the fjeld seemed now to have been reached, for the patches of snow were of greater extent and much more frequent than they had hitherto been, and sometimes we even crossed large streams over bridges of snow.

It was about an hour after our fresh start that the



F. M. Wyndham, del.

Hanhart, Chromolith.

SMÖRSTAB TINDERNE. SOGNE FJELD.

scene of most unrivalled beauty and savage grandeur burst upon us. Solitude and silence reigned supreme: the latter broken only by the roar of a mountain torrent, foaming and tossing as it rushed headlong down from its icy birth-place, at one time leaping over masses of ice, at another losing itself to sight as it plunged beneath a wide mass of snow—only emerging to renew its angry and turbulent course.

Immediately before us, still partially covered with the winter's ice, and bounded, on the southern side, by frowning cliffs of snow, the milky waters of a glacier-fed tarn reposed in calm stillness. Beyond this again the huge Smörstab Bræen (glacier), stretching far and wide in either direction, rose abruptly almost out of the waters of the lake. Then sloping upwards it reached at last the dark rocks, jutting up from out of the ice and forming a row of huge fantastic peaks which towered to the height of at least 7000 English feet above the sea. On our right lay a line of mighty rocks, covered with extensive fields of ice dipping almost into the lake, while to the left the undulating tract of moss-clad rocks extended far and wide.

Such a scene we would willingly have gazed upon at our leisure, but again we were forced to hurry on as the nearest habitation was yet distant. Onwards therefore, and still onwards, we toiled over rocks and

tracts of snow. Some of these were of considerable depth, not less than twenty feet; but, as they were all apparently drifts, they gave but little idea of what the uniform depth of snow might have been. Our caravan of four men, three ponies, a foal which followed its dam, and Shot, presented a most picturesque appearance as it wended its way in single file over the snow. The old man with the umbrella, though he spoke but little, was very energetic on the march, and boldly pushed forward as pilot whenever it was doubted whether the snow were perfectly safe.

To within a short distance of the foot of the Smörstab Bræen the track pursued an easterly course, but then, turning northwards, it soon quitted this wintry scene and plunged into the defile of Bœverdal. From the name Bœverdal (beaver-dale) one may infer that beavers, which are still sometimes to be met with in Norway, at one time abounded in this valley. Roaming about near the foot of the glacier were a number of ponies, showing that, though still distant, civilised parts were being approached. On glancing at the barren rocks it strikes one as extraordinary how the ponies and cattle can thrive so well in these mountain regions; but it would appear, from the preference given to the fjeld-pasturage by the animals, that the grass there is sweeter than in the valleys. Before long the mountain-willow and stunted juniper with

writhing stem greeted us as we descended to the less elevated parts of the valley.

Between six and seven, as we reached the shores of a long lake into which the torrent from the Smörstab Bræen here expanded, a wreath of blue smoke, mingling with the pure mountain air, directed our attention to a couple of low wooden buildings by the water's edge. These were the Bœvertun sœters, the first habitation on this side of the fjeld, and here it was resolved to remain for the night, as the ponies appeared to be much fatigued. To tell the truth the halt was not unwelcome to myself, as I had walked the whole thirty-two miles from Skjolden, and fourteen hours had elapsed since we had quitted the Lyster Fjord.

Stooping low as we entered the little door of one of the buildings we found ourselves in a moderately-sized room, in which a couple of young girls were sitting at work knitting stockings. On the rude fire-place, in one corner of the room, a few logs of wood were burning with a cheerful blaze; against one of the walls stood the bed, and opposite was a small deal table, while the bare ground composed the floor. Our request to be allowed to pass the night at the sœters having been granted with the usual good will, we further begged that one of the sœters should be placed entirely at our disposal, and that the *pige* belonging to it should take up her quarters in the other building.

At length we succeeded in obtaining what we wished, and immediately proceeded to make ourselves as comfortable as circumstances would permit; and bringing in our baggage commenced preparations for supper.

By a curious chance, owing to my ignorance of the language, a most substantial article of food was added to the repast. During the conversation with the *pige* the sound *eier* had caught my ear, and, forgetting for the time that we were not in Germany, I concluded that my friend had been talking about eggs; and, as soon as the girl had left the room, I remarked how fortunate we were in finding eggs at the sœter. But to my disappointment nothing had been said about eggs, and I was assured that, as poultry never constitute any part of the live stock at sœters, it was very improbable that there should be any eggs. Fortunately, however, I persisted in my conviction, and, when the pige returned, my friend, out of mere curiosity, inquired if she had any eggs. "Ja, det har jeg," she answered (Yes, that have I), and, going into the milk-room adjoining, brought out a basin full of eggs.

My mistake gave much amusement when it was discovered how it had arisen. The person in charge of a sœter being called the *budeier* (*bud*, messenger, and *eier* possessor, a deputy-occupier), when my friend thus addressed the *pige*, the last syllable only caught my ear;

and, being so alert, after the long walk, to anything concerning food, I forgot that *egg* instead of *eier* was the Norse for eggs, and jumped at once to the conclusion that there were eggs at the sœter.

With a hearty good-will we soon sat down to supper, and made an excellent meal of eggs, bread, butter, and tea rendered more than usually good by the delicious cream from the milk-room. But our peace was much disturbed by some large sugar-loaf shaped cheeses, which, exhaling an extremely disagreeable odour, were far from desirable neighbours; however the *budeier*, at our particular request, removed them to the dairy.

On the whole, with the exception of the damp earth-floor, the sœter proved to be very comfortable. It was constructed, not of stones as the sœters near Sandvig, but of good stout timber put together after the usual Norsk fashion. Solid trunks of trees compose the walls; about six inches from the end of each "log" a notch, cut to a depth of about half the thickness of the timber, receives the end of the log laid at right angles to it; and to this log, in its turn, is adapted the end of another. Thus log is laid upon log all round in succession, the chinks being filled up with moss; and, when the walls have attained a sufficient height, apertures for the doors and windows are sawn out, and rafters are put up to support the roof. Upon the rafters is now fastened a layer of boards, placed

transversely with the edges simply touching; and above this again comes a layer of birch bark, each piece overlapping the other: at the top of all is then thrown a quantity of earth and stones to the depth of several inches, and the exterior of the house is complete.

The substantial walls of the sœters render them very warm, and, our cooking operations concluded, we partially extinguished the large fire on the hearth, and commenced arrangements for the night. My companion had his hammock with him; which, in course of time, he managed to suspend from the walls. To me remained the bed, over which I spread my large waterproof sheet. It was extremely short, and, when I placed my feet against the wall at the foot of it, my head and shoulders came out at the other end, so that I was compelled to lie coiled up like a snake. But the natives sleep in a half-sitting posture with a very high pillow, so that a short bed is sufficient for even a tall person.

Not long after we had taken up our quarters for the night, the budeier entered the sœter, and, throwing log after log upon the hearth, made up a blazing fire. As she urged the flames visions of nocturnal cheese-making passed vividly before us; but our fears were groundless for, in answer to our inquiries, she said that she only wanted light to see by. After poking the fire, and going in and out of the milk-room a few times, she

wént away, having evidently been deputed to see what we strange creatures were doing.

With great joy we hailed her departure, and, the fire being once more extinguished, we composed ourselves to sleep, from which we were not again disturbed.

CHAP. VII.

Milking the Cows.—Norwegian Evasiveness.—Farm-house of Kvandesvold.—Sunday Cakes.—Rödseim.—Arrival at Andvord.—Quaint Granary.—The Otta Vand.—Olaf, a Reindeer-hunter.—Irrigation of Land.—Carrioles.—Social Equality.—Farm of Gräffer.—Costumes and Silver Plate.—Two-pronged Forks.—Moonlight Walk.—Climate influencing Snow-line.—Church of Lom.

EARLY in the morning the budeier entered the sœter to fetch her milk-pails, and soon after she was calling lustily to the cattle in a long shrill scream, followed by the name of the particular cow wanted: the name of each animal being uttered in a different tone. The cows on hearing the shrill summons came down from the hills in all directions and soon were collected round the sœter; when the budeier, seating herself on a little two-legged stool, commenced milking them. This concluded, and the milk stowed away in the dairy, she again went out, but this time with a bag of salt in her hand. Each cow, as it came to the call, received first a small handful of salt, and then a pat on the back,—the permission for it to depart, and without which not a cow ventured to stir from the sœter.

During this time we were occupied in preparing our breakfast, boiling the eggs, and making coffee. Before long the ponies were once more at the door, and, the packs having been fastened to the saddle-trees, we proceeded on our journey. It was in weather very different from that of the previous day that we resumed our march; for rain was falling in a thick drizzling mist, affording no prospects of amendment.

For about a couple of miles the road led over very rough ground by the shores of the lake, and then skirted the river-bank. Soon after quitting the lake a few sœters, situated on rising ground above the river, appeared in sight. These were the property of the clergyman of Lom, and, he being an acquaintance of my companion, we inquired of some women, who were turning the hay in the enclosure before the sœters, whether any of the clergyman's family were staying there.

"*Kanskee*" (perhaps), was the cautious answer which we received.

"But do you not know whether there be any one at the sœters?"

"No, I do not."

"Well, do you *think* that there is any one there?"

"There might be some one," was the evasive reply.

"But you surely belong to the sœters?"

"Yes, certainly."

"Then you must know whether there were any one there when you came away?"

"There was no one there then," was the simultaneous reply of the women.

Having thus by a process of indirect reasoning come to the conclusion that there were none of the clergyman's family at the sœters — for the women were only about a hundred yards from them and could not fail to notice any arrival, — we pursued our journey down the valley. In one place our progress was delayed for a time by having to ford a rushing torrent; and in order to get over dry I mounted behind my companion on his pony, but, as it scrambled up the low but perpendicular bank opposite, it was with the greatest difficulty that I could prevent myself from falling off backwards into the water, and I heartily wished that I had crossed the river on foot.

At about midday we reached the farm of Kvandesvold where we were to part with the Oftun horses and guide. In obtaining fresh horses with which to continue our journey we met with some difficulty, the farmer raising various objections against supplying us with what we wanted: however, he finally consented, and a guide and a couple of ponies were ordered.

The time elapsing before the horses were ready was well spent in taking some refreshment. A bowl of milk, a plentiful supply of flad-bröd and cheese, and a

plate of biscuits were laid out on the table of a neat and cleanly apartment. The biscuits were Sunday cakes, not being generally brought out on other days except, as now, to do honour to a stranger; they are made with cream, and are baked by being held in the fire in an iron machine shaped like a pair of tongs. Being considered as great delicacies it was with much astonishment that the *pige* watched me spreading butter upon them. In my ignorance, I was not aware that I was thus offering an insult to the cakes and hurting the feelings of the *pige;* accordingly, on learning this I immediately omitted the butter. Even insignificant customs such as this it is well to observe, where the natives are so hospitable that they invariably provide the stranger with the best things they can offer: and, being thus anxious to make their guests comfortable, they are very sensitive of any signs of depreciation of their good things.

Again we were on the road, and, for the first time after leaving Skjolden, I mounted the cream-coloured pony which we retained as a saddle-horse. But the effects of the meal and the long walk were very soporific, and, after waking several times only just soon enough to prevent falling from the pony, I thought it prudent to continue the journey on foot. The valley, as we proceeded, increased in beauty, and now the barren rocks had given place to slopes thickly wooded

with Scotch fir and birch trees, and, at intervals, snow-clad peaks and wide-spreading glaciers would peep out through openings on the right.

On reaching the next station, or rather *first* station, Rödseim, about seven English miles from Kvandesvold, we found that, five ponies having been taken by a party of Englishmen, there was only one remaining. Owing to their having pursued a different track to the Bœvertun sœters we had not fallen in with them, but we heard afterwards at Lom of their fame. Like unenterprising people they were travelling with a *tolk*, or interpreter, who, however, did not seem to have prevented their being greatly imposed upon in crossing the Haalangen Fjeld to the north of Lom.

Our united baggage being too much for one pony, it was decided that, while my companion went on to Lom, about nine miles distant, I should remain at Rödseim till next morning. Fortunately, however, as compensation for the delay, the station was very clean and comfortable, and a *bonâ fide* bed was not unwelcome after the sleeping accommodation of the two preceding nights. An Amts Karte sheet of this district and the Dag-bog, or day-book, in which travellers enter their names served to pass the hours before bed-time. I wrote my name on the very same page, if I am not mistaken, as Captain Biddulph, R.A., who passed through Rödseim in 1849, just ten years before.

By nine o'clock next morning the pony had returned from Lom, my baggage was packed in *klöv*, and, attended by a small boy, I started on my way down the valley. For about a couple of miles the track led through beautiful scenery, along the steep slope overhanging the river. At Sülheim the pony was relieved from the packs, and harnessed to a stolkjœrre, in which we rattled along over ruts and stones, till, in a short time, we emerged upon a tolerable road continuing, for some distance, by the river-side. The warm rays of a bright sun, shining upon the steep sides of the valley, imparted to the scenery a more cheering aspect; while it filled us with hopes of more favourable weather. On this side of the Sogne Fjeld small birds appeared to be more numerous than in the districts through which I had as yet passed.

Soon after, the road, quitting the defile, emerged into a more open part of the valley, and the tall spire of Lom church appeared in view. About half a mile short of Lom, on reaching an extensive group of farm-buildings clustered round the station of Andvord, we halted the stolkjœrre, and, dismissing the skydskarl, I entered the house.

Passing through a large public room, a golden-haired damsel conducted me to a small one adjoining, furnished with a table, a couple of chairs, a stove, and a bed. This was let into the wall, not placed in a recess like a

Scotch peasant's bed, and consisted merely of an oblong excavation in which was laid a mattress, bed-clothes, and a pillow; in the day time it was concealed from view by folding-doors, which shut even with the wall, and whereon were depicted gay landscapes in brilliant colours. A very diminutive basin placed on a chair, a piece of yellow soap (an article, by the bye, not usually found in the best hotels on the continent), and one towel, constituted the apparatus for ablution; but an abundance of water being always forthcoming compensated for any defects in the arrangement.

Shortly after my arrival my friend walked up from the *præstegaard*, or parsonage, where he was staying, with a most hospitable message from the clergyman, inviting me to join their party at dinner. Near the road-side on the way to the *præstegaard* we passed a very curious building used as a granary. It was of a cubical shape, but the upper part projected several feet beyond the lower, giving this quite the appearance of a tall pedestal for supporting the square mass above. The præstegaard, a comfortable-looking house near the church, was surrounded by numerous farm-buildings. On reaching the house I was welcomed in the warmest terms by the excellent Provst, or Dean, who was standing at the top of the flight of steps leading to the door.

After dinner the provst's son walked with us to the

cottage of a peasant, who had accompanied my friend on a reindeer-stalking expedition during the autumn of the previous year; and, as we intended starting hence for the fjelds, we were anxious to obtain the services of this man as guide.

Leaving the prœstegaard, we followed the road which runs, in a westerly direction, towards Skeager. At the foot of a steep slope on our right were spread the waters of the long and narrow Otta Vand, which makes a very sharp bend at the point where the turbid Bœver Elv flows in after making rather a fine fall close to the prœstegaard. The sand deposited by the river has formed a large *delta*, covered with alders, amongst which we were told, unfortunately too late, that many woodcocks might be found. To our left and immediately above us towered a huge, conical, mountain, called Lomseggen, which, rising to a height of 5031 English feet above the sea and 3739 feet above Lom, forms the most striking feature in the scenery, and is justly the pride of the inhabitants. The lower part of it is wooded with fir, birch trees, and alders, but the bold masses of rock at its summit are quite above the limit of all shrubs.

Turning down through a small gate, after a walk of about a couple of miles, we descended a grassy slope to the cottage of the reindeer-hunter. Olaf, we found very busy shoemaking, while his wife was no less in-

dustriously employed at the family loom. Our arrangements were soon made; and it was agreed that, as soon



LOMSEGGEN, AND THE OTTA VAND.

as a pony had been procured to carry my share of baggage, Olaf should accompany us to the fjelds. Including the pony, his services were estimated at one dollar—4*s.* 6*d.* a day.

The room being excessively hot and close it was a great relief to regain the open air. The sun was now

sinking behind the western heavens, and joyfully we watched it disappear with favourable omens; and, the north side of the Sogne Fjeld being much drier than the south, we had good hopes of the weather amending.

The great care which is here taken of every little spring of water practically illustrates the comparative smallness of the rain-fall. Aqueducts, formed of hollowed-out trunks of trees, are seen traversing the fields in all directions; and thus, during the summer months, a plentiful supply of water is obtained both for the arable and pasture land. When it is wished to irrigate a field, a stoppage is made in one of the aqueducts, and the penned-back water is dashed over the land by means of a flat piece of wood, eighteen inches long and three broad, and curved slightly upwards; being rounded towards one end to form a handle. This little wooden machine is peculiar to the district of Lom, and indeed it forms the parish badge; it is employed for a variety of purposes, irrigating fields, beating clothes at the wash, &c. &c.

On the following morning two carrioles and a stolkjœrre were ordered, and we drove, a merry party, along the Vaage road. This was my first experience of a *carriole*, which, though the regular conveyance for passengers, is seldom met with in the more remote districts. It is a two-wheeled machine with very long shafts, on

which, in front of the axle-tree, is fixed the body, adapted for only one person, and not unlike in shape to a boat cut across near the bows and placed with the open end foremost. The weight being thus balanced between the pony and the axle-tree, the long, elastic, shafts supply the place of springs. Baggage is placed on a board, behind the body of the carriole, resting on the axle-tree; where also the skydskarl seats himself. Small parcels the traveller usually stows away between his legs, which he stretches out before him and rests on a cross-bar, or on little iron steps for the purpose. For the hilly roads of Norway, few conveyances can be safer than a carriole; it is very light, and, the body being so low and the shafts so long, in the case of the pony falling it is but little changed from its horizontal position, and the driver consequently runs small risk of being thrown out.

Alighting at a spot where a path led up through the woods, we dismissed the vehicles and walked up to a farm-house called Gräffer. In the grass field near the house we met Gräffer, the farmer, himself, to whom I was introduced as *the* Englishman, the natives always speaking of a foreigner as the Englishman, Frenchman, German, &c.

Though the absence of a titled aristocracy in Norway does not perhaps strike one as very peculiar, it seems strange at first that no one is either spoken of, or

to, as *Herr* — and this custom prevails not only amongst those on a social equality, or with gentlemen in conversation to one another, but ladies call gentlemen, and servants call masters, merely by their surnames; or by their Christian names if there be more than one person with the same surname; and even little children, who can only just articulate, call venerable, gray-headed, old men, simply by their surnames.

But it must not be supposed that there is any want of respect, any unpleasant familiarity, or any forcing of "fraternité" and "égalité" upon one. Far from it: the whole mass of the people are frank, straightforward, and endued with a remarkably gentleman-like spirit; and civility and manly respect are everywhere met with.

Gräffer was a portly personage, who possessed moreover a very red face, the cause of which was soon betrayed by his gait. He was very loquacious, and, knowing a few words of German, inflicted them mercilessly upon me, repeating them constantly with great emphasis, and evidently flattering himself that I was much benefited by the conversation.

At the door we were met by the farmer's wife, a comfortable, purpose-like, looking dame. The customary welcome to the visitors was drunk in brandy, distilled, if I am not mistaken, from potatoes: it is a very strong spirit, and possessing a most disagreeable

flavour. Gräffer, however, seemed to relish it much, and availed himself of various little civilities, in drinking our healths successively, to imbibe a considerable quantity of *finkel.*

To pass the time before dinner, the good dame kindly showed us over the house and adjoining farm buildings. We were taken first to the store-houses; in one room stood enormous piles of flad-bröd, enough to last for many months, and from the beams were suspended a number of dried sheep's and goat's hams, known by the generic name of *Spege-kiöd;* in another room were sacks and bins full of grain of various description; while in a third were kept numerous sheep-skin rugs, which are much used in this part of the country as bed-covers. When we visited the dairy, I had the imprudence to venture into the cellar beneath, and to look into a coffin-shaped box where the *Gammel ost* was kept, and whence issued such an odour, that I quickly let go the lid and scrambled up the stairs again.

Now we returned to the house, and were shown into a room on the upper story, where against the wall were suspended a numerous assortment of coats, which had belonged to the father and grandfather of our hostess. They were cut like evening coats, and most of them were of scarlet cloth with much embroidery. These coats, the costume of this part of

Norway, were worn on high days and holidays; but I fear they have almost gone out of fashion in the present age. Two huge boxes, with the name of the original owner and the date of construction painted on them, next revealed their treasures to us. One of these contained the family plate, consisting of silver dish-covers, coffee-pots, forks, spoons, soup-ladles, and various other articles of the same metal; while in the other were carefully packed the fine table-cloths and superior linen which, like the red coats, only appeared on grand occasions. There were also a few richly embroidered women's caps, amongst which the good dame showed us, with great glee, the identical little cap she had worn at her own christening.

Thus the time was pleasantly whiled away till three o'clock, when dinner was announced. An omelet and slices of cold meat formed the substantial part of the meal, which, notwithstanding the abundance of silver plate in the big box, were eaten with two-pronged iron forks. Raspberries and milk as usual replaced the first course. The *finkel* bottle was not absent, but there was also a stone-ware pot on the table containing beer. It had a superb lid of solid embossed silver, and in the centre was let in a silver coin the date of which probably corresponded with that of the cover.

Dinner concluded we took our guns and scrambled up through fir woods to the hills in search of willow-

grouse. The sun was intensely hot, and we halted at a rude sœter on the hill-side where an old woman treated us with some sour milk. We were unsuccessful in finding willow-grouse, and, after walking for some time in vain search, commenced a descent to the valley. A few black-game rose from among the brushwood on the precipitous slope, and, flying in different directions, were successively found by Shot, when, again taking to the wing, they fell victims to our guns. After making a present of part of our spoils to our good hostess, we started on our return to Andvord.

A beautiful evening rendered our long walk home particularly agreeable: to the left, dark forests of fir overhung the road, which led along the steep hill-side above the lake; before us the giant form of Lomseggen loomed hazily in the distance, rising, as it seemed, immediately out of the rippling waves of the Otta Vand; which, glittering in silvery expanse, reflected the rays of the clear full-moon. Andvord was regained between ten and eleven, and, after requesting the servant to come early with the coffee, we retired to our recesses in the walls.

Next morning, having filled our pockets with fladbröd and cheese, we shouldered our guns and commenced the ascent of Lomseggen, where report said that willow-grouse were abundant. A scramble of about a couple of hours brought us to what appeared

from below to be the summit, but which we found to be far exceeded by another mass of rock beyond. Southwards the snow-capped mountains of the Sogne Fjeld frowned majestically upon their less exalted neighbours. An angry look in the overhanging clouds gave them so wild and savage an aspect, as to make one shudder at the thoughts of having wandered so far among them. Northwards the eye ranged over the interminable smooth-looking rocks of the Haalangen Fjeld, while far away to the east rose the jagged and irregular peaks of the Rundane mountains. A purple tinge glowed upon their rugged forms, which, being perfectly dissimilar to those of any of the other mountains, rendered them striking objects in the distant scenery.

The scarcity of water on this mountain was very striking, but not astonishing when it was considered that, save perhaps a casual patch, there was not any snow. Here we have a good instance of climate determining the snow-line. At Nundal, near the Sogne Fjord, there were many patches of snow at a slight elevation above the limit of the birch trees—an altitude roughly estimated at rather under 3000 feet. But on Lomseggen, 5000 feet above the sea, scarce a patch of snow could be seen. The situation being continental, the rain or snow fall is limited, and the summer heat is more intense than at a place enjoying a maritime

climate, where a greater amount of snow falls, and the sun's power is sufficient to melt only a small proportion.

We wandered about the rocks the whole of the day, during which time we fell in with a shepherd tending a flock of sheep and goats; but beyond one covey of willow-grouse and a blue hare we saw no game. As evening drew on we returned to the place where we had ascended, but finding a practicable way, on the opposite face of the mountain, leading directly to Andvord, we chose it in preference.

Two days more we were detained at Lom waiting for the arrival of my pony. The church is a very picturesque building made entirely of wood, even to the roof which is composed of small pieces of wood shaped, and laid on, like tiles. A beautiful, tapering, spire rises from the centre of the building, and forms no insignificant object in the view of Lom. The belfry is well worthy of a visit for the sake of seeing the immense amount of timber used in the construction of the steeple, and divesting oneself of the idea of extreme fragility caused by the appearance of the exterior of the building.

Sunday was the next day, but the service happened to be at Skeager, at which place it is held alternately with Lom.

CHAP. VIII.

Off to the Fjelds.—Mid-day halt at a Sœter.—Reach Smaadal.—Handsome Peasant Girl.—Costume of Guldbransdalen.—Coffee-making.—On the Fjelds.—A hundred Reindeer fall over a Precipice.—Feast of Reindeer-Hunters.—Apathy of Peasants.—A desolate Tract.—Commercial Travellers on the Mountains.—Juniper-Tea.—Jacob, the Budeier.—Interior of Ruslien Sœters.—Use and Abuse of Coffee.—Willow-Grouse.—Gjendin Söen.—Peasant Sportsmen.—An old Reindeer-Hunter.—His Hut.—Providing Food.—Hunter's Fare.—Security in Norway.

THE pony having arrived at last, on Monday 22nd August Olaf, our guide, appeared at an early hour at the door of the Præstegaard. No time was lost in bringing out the various packages of coffee, rice, potatoes, bread, and other articles, as also the rolls of hammocks, the blankets, camp-kettle, &c., and these were now strewn in confusion upon the ground preparatory to being sorted and made up into different packs.

The baggage satisfactorily stowed away in the *klövsadel*, nothing remained but to bid farewell to the kind, hospitable, Provst and his family, and to start

at once for the fjelds. The eldest son of the Provst being of the party made our number up to four.

Crossing the Bœver Elv on the wooden bridge, which spans it immediately below the foaming cascade, we sauntered along the meadows by the river-side till we reached a path leading up the steep cliff of the valley. At intervals we halted to rest the ponies, and to look back upon the beautiful valley below, the rushing torrent, and the calm, green, lake with its fir-clad steeps.

As we ascended higher the view extended over the wide fjelds to the north and west; but soon the summit was gained, and, losing sight of the pleasant valley of Lom, we wandered on over rocky ground, which, being above the limit of birch-trees, was clothed only with juniper and mountain-willow. Here we hoped to meet with willow-grouse, and, with the help of Shot, I walked the ground which lay near the track, but without success.

Midday brought us to a few sœters near which a halt was made, and the ponies, having been relieved of their packs, were set at liberty. After providing ourselves with a small supply of bread and meat from the packs we entered one of the sœters. In a very small room, which savoured strongly of cheese, a stout, rosy-faced girl was lustily stirring with a stick a quantity of skim milk in a large iron cauldron, suspended over a

blazing fire in one corner of the room. On some shelves against the wall stood a number of the large, white, conical gammel ost (old cheese), fully accounting for the unpleasant smell which had greeted us on entering. A door opened into the milk room, where was disposed a goodly array of flat wooden vessels filled with milk. A bowl of this, at our request, was set before us, with which and our bread and meat we made an excellent meal.

In another hour we were once more on our way, plodding along over rocky ground by the side of a clear-running stream. The scenery, as we proceeded, increased in wildness and grandeur; and, at length, a snow-capped mountain, peeping out through a cleft on our right, afforded us some idea of the magnificent country hidden from our view by the precipitous sides of the valley.

But we were now approaching our destination, and, after continuing for some distance further along the desolate valley by the side of a river, we reached the Smaadal sœters (3807 Eng. ft.) where we intended to pass the night. The horses, forthwith released from their packs, were hobbled with withes and allowed to wander up to the fjelds. The sœter into which we entered, though not large, was very superior to any that I had hitherto seen; it was very clean, and moreover possessed the luxury of a good wooden floor.

On inquiring about accommodation for the night we found that, besides the budeier and the son of the proprietor named Blaker, there were no less than seven workmen at this sœter, and so we started immediately in search of house room at the sœters adjoining. There was one tenanted only by a woman, with whom we bargained that she should give it up to my friend and myself and betake herself to a sœter close by. She was the handsomest woman I saw in Norway: black hair, greenish gray eyes, fine features, and above all a good figure — rarely to be met with among the peasantry — all combined to constitute her a "beauty." Our hostess was merry and good-humoured into the bargain: and, on the whole, we congratulated ourselves on our new quarters, and especially on our escape from the other sœter, where the company of so many inveterate tobacco-chewers would have been very unpleasant.

But evening was fast approaching, and we walked down to the river to set our night-lines in order that we might have a good breakfast of trout on the morrow. It was nearly dark when we returned to Blaker's sœter, where we kept all our provisions, &c. The men, having finished their work for the day, were now all assembled in the room of the building. Their appearance was not prepossessing; for, although the houses in the province of Guldbransdalen are infinitely supe-

rior to those of the Bergenstift, the men are much less cleanly in person and dress. A shabby tail-coat with brass buttons, leather trousers, and red worsted night-cap was the dress of these men — a great contrast to the smart blue suit with silver buttons, worn by the men of the Bergenstift. In the costume of the fairer sex there is nothing remarkable, the only peculiarity being the bright orange handkerchiefs tied over the head, and which are very becoming.

The budeier, in this sœter a man, was busily engaged in preparing supper for the work-people. Fine barley-meal was thrown into boiling water and thoroughly mixed with a stick; and then, poured out into a bowl, it was placed upon a table, which, when not in use, was turned down against the wall. Round this the men now gathered, and, each one having provided himself with a short wooden spoon, the meal commenced. Lumps of this porridge were dug out and eaten with sour milk with much apparent relish. Gröd is the name given to this dish, which forms the staple food of the Norwegian peasantry; it is a most unpalatable food, owing to its not being boiled. To Scotch oat-meal porridge, which is unknown in Norway, it has no resemblance.

In the mean time we occupied ourselves with preparing our own supper, cooking the coffee, and boiling the eggs which we had brought with us; and before long

we were seated at the table now vacated by the work-people. The coffee was excellent; the delicious cream of the sœter making it quite a luxury. Coffee in Norway is made in small copper kettles, in which it is boiled till it rises up in a thick froth; it is then stirred, and, some isinglass, or merely fish-skin, and a bit of red-hot charcoal having been thrown in, it is left to stand by the fire till clear. Thus prepared coffee is much superior to that made in any other manner.

During the evening the workmen amused themselves with cutting out little articles of wood—an example which I also followed, and, in due time, produced a small spoon to do duty as egg and tea spoon, which I afterwards found very useful. We retired early to our own sœter, leaving the Provst's son and Olaf at Blaker's sœter, and passed a comfortable night, my friend in his hammock, and I on the bed of hay.

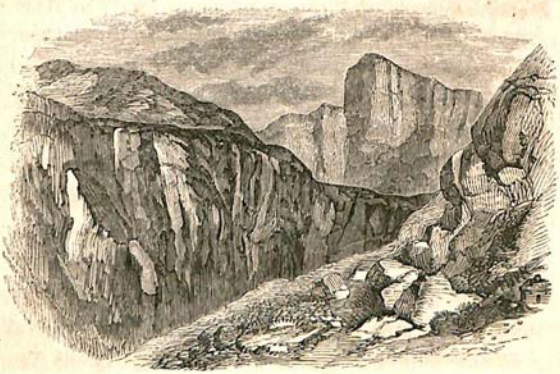
Early next morning we were awoke by the arrival of the budeier for her milkpails. On rising we went to the river to inspect the night-lines, and to our joy found several fine trout hooked. This was no doubt rather a poaching way of proceeding, but, when one depends for food upon what one kills, the first object is to make sure of a supply.

After our breakfast of trout we started up to the fjelds immediately behind the sœters. We ascended to a considerable height, to about the level at which

reindeer are generally met with at this time of year, but beyond the slot of one we saw no signs of deer; and excepting a few very wild ptarmigan, and a leveret which Shot pounced upon, we found no game whatever. Numerous patches of snow were crossed, on which red snow was rather frequent, but never of any extent.

But the scenery amply repaid all toil and trouble; for the view over Smaadal was quite magnificent. Beyond a wide and extensive tract of barren rocks rose huge, dark, peaks out of vast fields of snow and ice, which glittered with dazzling brilliancy in the glorious sunshine. As we sat contemplating this splendid scene, the conversation of Olaf turned to a curious incident which happened, about two years previously, almost immediately opposite the Smaadal sœters. It was about the middle of October, when snow was already lying deep upon the ground, that three hunters were one day pursuing a herd of about a hundred reindeer on the comparatively level tract above Smaadal. Overhanging the perpendicular precipice of the valley was a ledge of snow, upon which the whole herd, in their endeavours to avoid their pursuers, incautiously ventured. But the snow was not strong enough to bear the weight of so many deer, and, suddenly giving way, the whole herd was precipitated into the valley below, and not a deer survived the fall. A grand harvest was thus afforded to the peasants of Lom, who were

engaged for several months in bringing the deer down to the valleys. The greater share, however, fell to the lot of the wolves, gluttons (fjeld-fras), and foxes.



SMAADAL, WITH THE PRECIPICE OVER WHICH THE REINDEER FELL.

On our way back to the sœters we fell in with the ponies, which we caught and led down to the valley, in order that nothing might retard our departure on the morrow. At the sœters we found some new comers. Two peasants had just come down from the fjelds after a successful reindeer-hunt, having killed two deer, with which they were returning to Lom. Their arrival was hailed by us with great delight, not only because we hoped to obtain some valuable information about the chance of finding reindeer, but also because we should

be enabled to stock our larder with a supply of fresh meat. We invested in the tongues and some of the venison, for which we paid one mark, equal to 10*d.* English money.

A little dog, trained for reindeer-hunting, accompanied one of the peasants; a good dog of this sort will lead the hunter up to the deer, and will also follow a deer that has been wounded. We were very anxious to buy the dog, but the owner asked such an enormous price as to put it quite out of the question. When we retired to rest the Provst's son and Olaf repaired to a feast given by the reindeer-hunters at an adjoining sœter, and this was probably the reason of the late hour at which they rose next morning.

Olaf, as soon as he had risen from his bed of hay, in obedience to our injunctions, went out to look after the ponies; but he found that they had returned to the fjelds, whither he also was obliged to ascend. They were feeding on the very spot where we had fallen in with them on the previous afternoon; and he at once brought them down again to the sœters. By this time the peasants were already at their work, clearing out the cow-yard and manuring the grass enclosure before the sœter, using sledges for the purpose instead of carts, on account of the steepness of the hill-side.

When all seemed ready we made preparations for a

start, but, to our dismay, the ponies had again disappeared, Olaf having foolishly omitted to tether them; and, although they were hobbled, had managed to regain the fjelds while we were at breakfast. Olaf's dilatoriness and apathy were by no means pleasing, either to my friend or myself; and, as it was ten o'clock instead of six when we started, we administered a gentle rebuke, telling him that if such another delay should occur he might make the best of his way back to Lom. The Norwegian peasantry are an excellent people, but, like all others, they have their failings, foremost amongst which are dilatoriness and apathy. These, however, to their credit are easy to deal with if there be only one native, which shows them to be tractable in the main; but if there be a number assembled together it is often extremely difficult to induce any one of them to do anything beyond what he likes when it suits him.

Leaving the sœters the track continued, for a considerable distance, along the north side of Smaadal; and then our route lay across the river and up the opposite steep of the valley. There was of course no bridge, and it was necessary to ford the stream. Mounting one of the ponies behind the pack, in the hopes of getting over dry, I rode it into the river; all went well for the first few yards, when suddenly the pony gave a desperate flounder and fell forward on its

nose, leaving me standing in the river with a foot on each side of it. Deserting the pony, under which the bed of the river had given way, I hastened back to land, and, having made preparations for fording on foot, once more entered the river, and this time crossed in safety. Henceforth I resolved never to attempt the passage of a river either on a pack-pony or behind another person as a second rider.

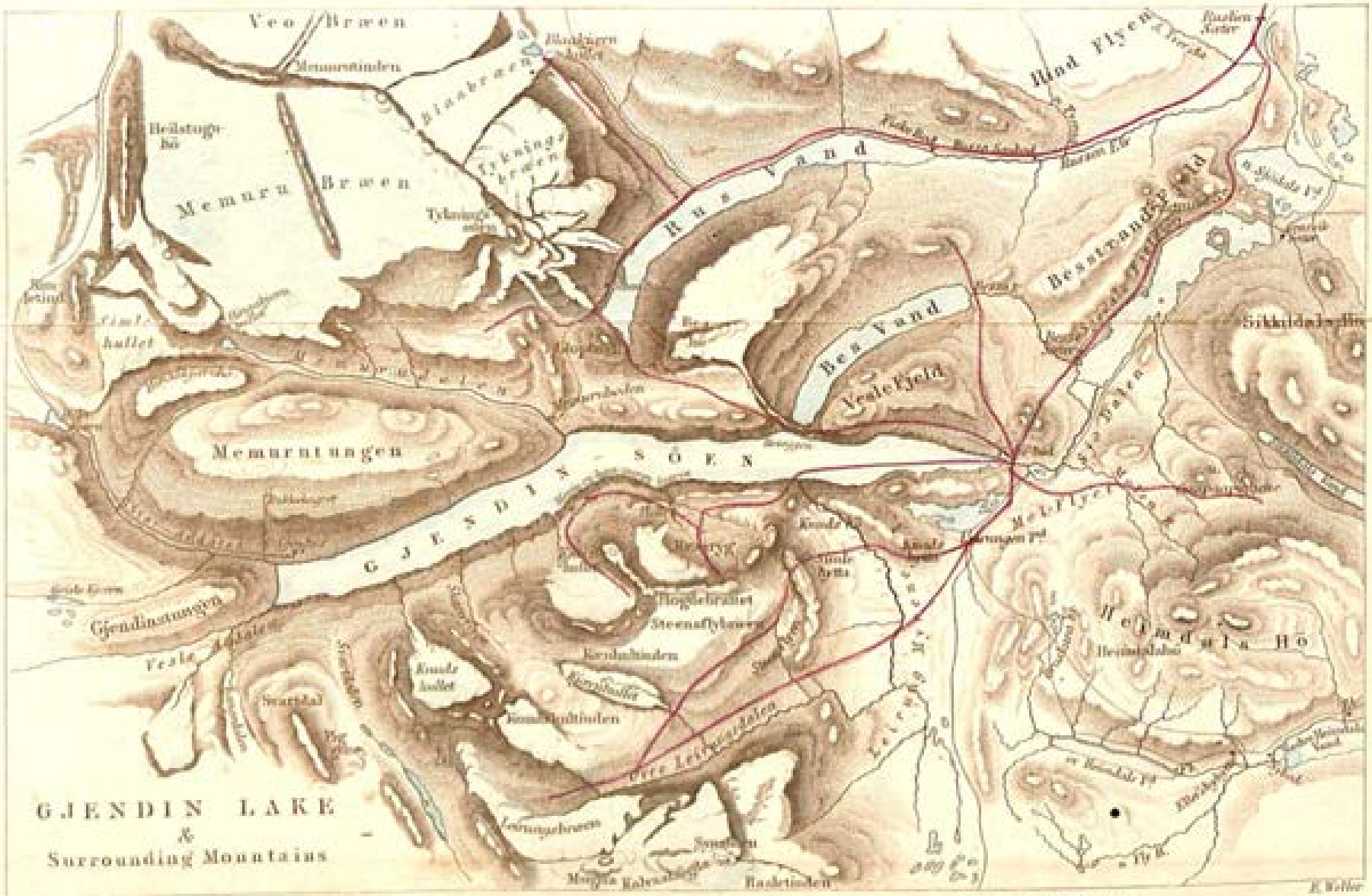
The steep side of the valley ascended, we found ourselves on a wide and comparatively level expanse, over which the eye wandered without interruption for many a mile. A herd of horses and a flock of sheep were grazing at a little distance, but, when these were left behind, we had quitted all signs of civilisation. Our route lay immediately over the desolate waste in an easterly direction. At some distance to our right rose huge mountains girt with snow and ice, while at their base rolled an impetuous torrent, hurrying along to more genial scenes in the valleys below. At intervals we halted to survey the ground with the telescope, but no reindeer, either far or near, could be discovered. In fact, this waste seemed to be a most inhospitable tract, for neither willow-grouse nor ptarmigan were met with during the whole of the day. When about half way across we sat down to dinner, relieving the ponies, as usual, from their heavy packs. But another half-hour found us once more on the march, for but little time

could be spared, as otherwise we might be benighted on this dreary waste.

At length, about six hours after leaving Smaadal, a point was reached from which this high table-land sloped gradually downwards. The sides of the valley beneath were thickly wooded with sombre forests of Scotch fir, rendering it a favourite resort of bears; and along it could be traced, for a considerable distance, the silvery course of a wide river. A few sœters stood on an elevated position to our left overlooking the valley; but these were passed unheeded, and, edging off to the right in our descent, we soon reached a wooden bridge over the Veo Elv, which we had seen rushing down from the glaciers above.

An open tract studded with birch trees now lay before us, and here we fell in with two men travelling also with pack-horses; but they were on a different errand, for the wooden boxes forming the packs were full of goods of various descriptions which they were taking up to the sœters in hopes of meeting with purchasers. Shortly after, we reached Hind sœters, where the commercial travellers halted, and we made a momentary delay to refresh ourselves with a drink of milk.

We now continued along the grassy flats by the side of the impetuous Sjo Elv, and between seven and eight o'clock Ruslien sœters, our long-wished-for des-


Veo Brœen
Memurstinden
Blaabræen
Beilstugo Bö
Memurn Brœen
Tykninge brœen
Rus Vand
Ilnd Flyen
Besætvandet
Bea Vand
Vesle Eyeln
Memurnaungen
GJESDIN SÖEN
Gjendinaungen
Floggebrattet
Steenaflyhaugen
Kvitdalstinden
Knudtskaltinden
Leirungsbræen
Memurn Bö
Sikkildalen Bö
GJENDIN LAKE
&
Surrounding Mountains
London, Longman & Co
English Miles
Russian Versts

tination, came in sight. They stood on rising ground some way above the river, and in front of them were the usual enclosures of meadow-land, the grass of which had been but recently turned into hay. The fences around these were of the common and simple construction: at intervals two stakes are driven into the ground opposite each other and about six inches apart; between these, joined together by two or three withes, rough fir poles are laid one above another in a slanting direction, and thus a very good fence is constructed, the only thing requisite being an abundance of wood.

Before the sœter, to which we were bound, blazed a large wood-fire, and over it was suspended a huge iron pot in charge of an old woman, who, from appearance, might readily have been mistaken for a witch. Her occupation was boiling juniper branches, which, when sufficiently cooked, were taken out and replaced by fresh ones; the juniper tea, as it was ladled out, was carried to the sœter and poured into an immense vat standing in the ante-room of the building. The boiled branches we were told were for the cows to eat and the tea for them to drink, though this was also used for washing out the wooden vessels in which the milk is kept. The ponies, as usual, were hobbled and turned loose, and this time we had little fear of their straying far as there was such excellent pasturage by the river.

We were now warmly welcomed to the sœter by Jacob, the budeier, a merry little man with a very squeaky voice; in him the usual hospitable feelings and good-nature were predominant, and he did all he could to render us comfortable, first of all presenting us with a bowl of delicious milk.

This sœter was a very fine one, consisting of a spacious apartment, in which the budeier lived and carried on the dairy operations, and a milk-room of proportionate dimensions. From buildings such as these, which are constructed entirely with a view to comfort, model-cottage builders and architects might perhaps derive a few useful hints. From personal experience I can vouch for the perfect absence of all draught in the sœters of Norway, and also for their great warmth

A good Norwegian sœter, of which those of Guldbransdal may be taken as patterns, is a long log-constructed building, having only a ground floor. The entrance door, which is placed at the end of one of the long sides, opens into an ante-room running the whole width of the building. From this ante-room, in which are kept the vats, milk-pails and other articles of dairy use, a door in the middle of the partition wall leads into the one large room used alike as kitchen and sleeping-room; a corresponding door opens into the milk-room, which, proportioned to the size of the sœter, is always smaller than the dwelling-room. By this arrangement

of doors the thorough draughts, consequent on the English plan of front-and-back-door buildings, are entirely obviated.

A couple of windows looking towards the river afforded an ample supply of light, and between them stood a large deal table, at either end of which, against the wall, was one of the ordinary beds. A very large triangular-shaped fireplace, surmounted by an immense dome, entirely filled one corner of the room; the space between the walls of the house and the massive stone walls of the fireplace being well filled with logs of wood placed there to dry. From the date upon the dome and upon the two silver spoons, we saw that the sœter had been built in 1754; but, notwithstanding its age, the timbers of which it was constructed showed no symptoms whatever of decay. In one corner hung a large clock, and a row of shelves contained the crockery-ware of the sœter.

But the long walk had made us extremely hungry, and we lost no time in preparing our supper. The best part of our venison having been fried, the inferior meat was thrown into the pot to be made into soup. Excellent coffee served to quench our thirst, and it may here be remarked that (in a healthy country at any rate) the use of strong drink is best abandoned when an expedition, requiring the full bodily powers, is undertaken. Colonel Sir. J. E. Alexander, a competent authority

on such matters, remarks, in an article on "Camp Life" in the United Service Magazine, "for long or short expeditions spirits lead only to mischief." But even coffee cannot be indulged in to excess with impunity; and, as an instance of its effects, I was told that a Norwegian peasant in the neighbourhood had carried coffee-drinking to such an extent as to be scarcely able to eat anything, and it was said that he subsisted almost entirely upon coffee.

Supper concluded, a general move followed, and all retired to rest; the old woman and little girl betaking themselves to an adjoining sœter, Jacob climbing up into a roosting-place, composed of planks laid from beam to beam, about eight feet above the floor, while we disposed ourselves, some on the beds and others in the two hammocks.

Early next morning we were astir, and, after a good breakfast of venison, started on our day's march. About a couple of miles further up the valley we crossed a wooden bridge over an impetuous torrent, the Russen Elv; and here, leaving Olaf to continue along the banks of the Sjo Elv, we struck off to the right and made through the thick fir woods, towards the high ground before us in search of willow-grouse to replenish the now empty larder. The hoarse croaking of the grouse as we mounted upwards filled us with hope, and just after passing the limit of the birch-trees a fine

covey rose from among the dwarf willows, and five were killed on our way over the high ground.

Now descending into the valley, partially filled up by the long lake into which the Sjo Elv here expands, we continued along the water-side, till, at about noon, we reached the Besse sœters, where it had been agreed that Olaf should meet us.

Marit, the budeier of the sœter into which we entered, was a merry, good-humoured, girl, with some pretensions to beauty, and a great profusion of long, flowing, locks. Like all budeiers she seemed to be delighted at the sight of some new faces to vary the society of the cows and sheep. Upon these sœters we should be dependent, during the next ten days, for supplies of butter, cream, milk, and cheese, and so we stipulated with Marit that she should provide us with those good things when required.

Leaving Besse sœters we continued our way over rocky ground, covered on the lower side of the hill with thick birch woods reaching down to the lake; while above us the bare rocks rose majestically aloft, frowning darkly upon the more genial tracts below.

At last, on reaching an eminence about two or three miles from the sœters, we looked down upon our future quarters. What a magnificent prospect lay before us! how still how solemn the scene! the silence broken only by the rush of the river as it flowed out from the

lake, or the hoarse croak of a willow-grouse, perched upon a neighbouring rock. Below us lay the magnificent lake of Gjendin, whose calm expanse of sea-green water stretched away for several miles to the west. On either side of the lake, huge, perpendicular, walls of rock rose out of the water, towering to a height of a thousand feet or more; and beyond these appeared lofty peaks shooting out from glittering fields of snow and ice. More magnificent lake scenery it would be difficult to imagine, and I fear that the sketch appended, though it may convey some notion of the style of scenery, can give but a limited idea of the extreme beauty of this lake and the surrounding mountains.

Upon the opposite bank of the Sjo Elv, which here commences its course, stood a group of wooden huts at a few yards from the river-bank. These huts, some of which were boat-houses, were the property of a few peasants, whose permanent residence was in a valley called Hedal, about forty English miles distant; they were, in fact, their shooting-boxes, to which the owners came in the summer-time for fishing and reindeer-hunting.

The *peasants* of Norway are the only sportsmen of the country, the upper classes having no taste for, and very little idea of, sport; but, of course, there are exceptions, though these I fear are but few. And it is



F. M. Wyndham, del.

Hanhart, Chromolith.

GJENDIN SÖEN.

not the love of sport which brings even the peasant up to the mountains in search of reindeer, his sole object being to provide himself with food to last him through the winter months. The result therefore is that those who are not compelled to seek their food on the fjelds are scarcely aware that such a thing as game exists in the country. Fishing, however, is not so uncommon an amusement, and I met one or two Norwegian gentlemen, who were very good anglers; nor were they unacquainted with the use of the gun and rifle.

The rest of the party had already crossed the river, when leaving the heights, after adding another brace of grouse to the supply of game, I hastened down the steep to the river-bank. On my approaching the river an old man, in a blue tail-coat with brass buttons, and a red worsted nightcap on his head, came out from one of the huts, and, taking his seat in a boat, rowed across the stream to ferry me over. Joh was a fine old man, of about seventy, rather above the middle stature, and apparently very powerful and muscular, of which he certainly gave us proof by the long day's work he was able to endure. He was the owner of the hut in which we were to take up our abode during our sojourn by the shores of the Gjendin Söen; and my companion, having already made his acquaintance, had sent him a message begging him to find us accommodation at the huts. To this request he had most kindly ac-

quiesced, and for our reception had prepared his own hut, which he, for the time, vacated.

It was a log-built edifice, but, for the sake of appearance, was covered on the exterior with flat boards; the roof was of the usual construction, but made with more than ordinary care. A small door, the lintel of which was constantly coming into collision with one's forehead, gave admittance to the one little room of the building. It was about eight feet square, and consequently a small window gave sufficient light; in one corner was the fireplace, of the usual triangular shape, a form peculiarly adapted for carrying on cooking operations; against one of the walls stood a broad bench, slightly hollowed out along the centre and with a rim on one side to prevent the hay used as bedding from falling off; a couple of three-legged stools, a plank which served as bench and dinner table, and a few shelves, completed the arrangements. A map of the Netherlands, a hydrographical map of Germany, and a copy of the Norwegian Game Laws, adorned the walls.

In this hut we were to remain for the next ten days, and so we set to work, at once, to install ourselves. The packs were undone, and the coffee, sugar, and other small groceries were arranged upon the shelves; while the heavier baggage, such as rugs, hammocks, and the sack of hay which we had brought from the

Besse sœters, was stowed away in the boat-house. Here was a great variety of articles, spare oars, saws and axes, one or two pair of *ski*, sets of *klöv*, fish-nets, and many other things belonging to old Joh's establishment.

The two other huts close by, to each of which also belonged a boat-house, or rather general storehouse, were both occupied by their proprietors. Horns of reindeer nailed over the doors adorned the buildings, and gave them a very wild and picturesque appearance; immediately below the horns the walls were marked with deep scratches, caused, I was told, by the claws of gluttons in their futile attempts of clambering up to the horns for the purpose of devouring them.

We were met at these huts by another guide named Peter, who belonged to a small hamlet in Hedal. He was a fine, tall, man of about five and forty, and, unlike the generality of Norwegians, his eyes and hair were very dark; a bright eye and cheerful countenance displayed considerable intelligence. Having been a good deal in the company of a resident Englishman he had picked up a certain amount of English, enabling me to converse with him without difficulty, for between Norse and English we got on very well; and fortunate it was so, for he afterwards, for a short time, became my sole companion.

As soon as we were established in our new quarters

we commenced taking measures for obtaining a regular supply of fish, as we were now wholly dependent upon our own resources for providing ourselves with animal food. Rather more than half a mile distant lay a small, shallow, lake, where it was determined that nets should be set for trout, and thither we started without delay. On the way three more willow-grouse were added to our provisions, and, now that there was sufficient to last for a day or two, we felt no anxiety with respect to food. The natives were much interested in seeing me shoot the birds when on the wing, as also with the performances of Shot; for the whole plan was quite new to them, their own way being to shoot the birds with a rifle in the winter-time as they lie half buried in the snow.

On returning to the huts we began our preparations for supper; and the grouse having been skinned,—the most expeditious way of ridding them of their feathers,—were consigned whole to the iron pot, together with some slices of bacon and a handful of rice; another cooking utensil was occupied by a quantity of potatoes. Coffee was our beverage, and with the excellent soup and potatoes we made a very good meal. In the evening we held a consultation as to the direction in which we should set out on the morrow in search of reindeer. Finally it was decided that my companion and I, accompanied by Peter, should proceed to Lei-

rungsdal, about eight miles distant, while the Provst's son and Olaf scoured the fjelds in another direction.

Before dark we rowed out on the Gjendin to set night-lines for trout, and, on returning, carried the hammocks, sack of hay, and rugs, up to the hut. To me was allotted the broad bench strewn with hay as resting-place, while the hammocks formed beds for the other two; Peter, Joh, and Olaf betaking themselves elsewhere, as three were as many as the hut could accommodate.

A feeling of extreme security pervades the traveller in Norway; whether he be on the frequented roads, or on the wide and desolate fjelds, he feels alike in safety; by locking his door he violates the custom of the country, for, even on the high roads, the doors of stations may be found wide open in the dead of night. Few countries can equal Norway in this respect, and this feeling of security imperceptibly adds in a great measure to the delights of travelling in this noble country

CHAP. IX.

Out after Reindeer. — Fording a Torrent. — Mountain Shepherd's Hut. — Leirungsdal. — Grand Scenery. — No Reindeer. — Steensflyen. — Former Extension of Glaciers. — Repast of Whortleberries. — At the Hut again. — Forty Miles for Provisions. — Römme-kolle. — Marit and Sigeri. — A charmed Bullet. — Rude Candlestick. — Fjeld Cookery. — Reindeer-Hunter's Life. — Aversion of Peasants to unsalted Butter. — Trout fishing.

THE sun rose bright, in a cloudless sky, on my first day of reindeer-hunting, and, with buoyant spirits, we hurried out to breathe the fresh, cool, air of early morn. The icy water of the river was very refreshing, and prepared one for the toils of the day, at the same time giving a keener edge to our appetites. The hay, the hammocks, and rugs, having been all transferred to the boat-house, the fire was lit, and the iron pot and coffee-kettle put on to boil. Presently those who had gone out in the boat to take up the night-lines returned with several fine trout, which were soon being cooked for breakfast; and most excellent they proved, being red-fleshed and having much the flavour of salmon.

Breakfast concluded, we started on our day's work;

leaving Shot, however, on account of his conspicuous colour, imprisoned in the hut. Soon after passing the lake, Leirungs Vand, where the nets were set, we separated into two parties; my companion, Peter, and I continuing straight on southwards, while the others struck away in an easterly direction. Presently we reached a vast plain, dotted here and there with dwarf willows; heather I never saw during my stay in the mountains. Here we found a good many willow-grouse, which rendered more hopeful our prospects of obtaining food, and one of these I shot through the head with my rifle as it sat on a stone.

A walk of about two hours from the huts brought us to a river of about fifty yards in width. As it rolled swiftly along, dashing with a roar against the opposing rocks, it presented by no means an inviting appearance; but, as no bridge existed, the fording was unavoidable. After some little preparation (taking the indispensable precaution to ford with our boots on) we entered the torrent, which, coming direct from a glacier but a few miles distant, was icy cold. The stream ran strong, and the bed of the river being extremely rough and broken rendered the passage a matter of no small difficulty. As the middle of the stream was gained the water grew deeper and deeper, and the current flowed past with increased vehemence; and we now felt that the least falter would leave us at the mercy of the

torrent, from which an escape without serious hurt would have been impossible. However, the opposite bank was gained in safety, and nothing could have been pleasanter than the brisk reaction which followed the immersion in the icy water.

In about another hour we reached the entrance to Leirungsdal, where, in a sheltered nook among the rocks, stood the stone hut of a mountain cowherd, who was in charge of a number of oxen fattening for the Christiania market. The occupier of the hut was not at home, but we fortunately found the object of our entry —a bowl of cool milk, a copious draught of which we all indulged in, and, leaving a few *skillings* in the iron pot, we quitted the hut and continued our way up the valley.

A most magnificent view, rendered doubly beautiful from the clear sky and the bright sunshine, now opened upon us. Immediately in front, an immense glacier, descending in a broad sweep from the recesses of rock above, seemed almost entirely to block up the valley. Behind it towered dark walls of rock, shooting up out of the field of ice in huge, perpendicular, masses, whose sombre hues contrasted grandly with the bright dazzling light from the enormous glacier. The sun casting its rays upon the northern side of the valley threw these mighty walls into dark shade, causing their outlines to stand out in prominent relief against the undimmed transparency of a northern sky. From the foot of the

glacier the river that we had forded poured its noisy stream, which dashed along at the foot of the massive rocks enclosing the valley on the southern side. Conspicuous amongst these rose one huge mountain, whose level parts were deeply covered with snow, while aloft rock above rock towered in rugged and precipitous masses.

Here we halted for a few minutes to inspect with the telescope some marks upon the snow; that they were the tracks of reindeer the naked eye could discern, but we were anxious to learn whether they were recent or not. The glass soon showed them to be some days old, and so we pursued our course towards the glacier. At intervals we halted to survey the dark rocks and the recesses of the glacier. But nothing could we see, and my friend and Peter reverted, in comparison to the present day, to the better fortune that had befallen them on other occasions. Two bears Peter had once seen here together, walking quietly on the opposite side of the river; but unfortunately neither he nor his companion had been able to approach within shot. In this valley also it was that, the autumn before, my friend had watched a herd of about five hundred reindeer, to which, however, to his great mortification, the nature of the ground had not allowed him to get near. Would that we could only have had the good fortune to have seen one reindeer!

Having ascended the ridge of rock, running from the north side of the valley to the glacier, we sat down, and producing bread and meat from our pockets commenced our mid-day meal, quenching our thirst with the icy water which flowed in all directions over the rocks. We were now, at a considerable height above the lower end of the glacier, upon a flat table-land, whence we gained a full view of the extensive ice-field, and were also able to scan its innermost recesses among the rocks. Now that we were in the very heart of these wild mountains and glittering ice-fields the scenery was still more grand and impressive than in the lower part of the valley. We seemed to be in a little world separate from the rest of the earth, and one forgot, for the time, the busy haunts of man, as, wrapt in contemplation, one gazed in awe-stricken wonder and silent admiration at the sublime scenery.

The walking had now become excessively arduous, for large stones and masses of rock lay heaped one upon another to an unknown depth, rendering great caution requisite, lest, slipping down between the rocks, one should break one's leg or otherwise seriously hurt oneself; and some of the stones tipping over to one side when stepped upon made it very difficult to retain one's balance.

We now proceeded very slowly, as at any moment we might come upon reindeer. From the table-land we

descended to a small lake bounded on one side by the steep ice-cliffs of the glaciers; the sand by the water was literally trodden down by reindeer, and some of the tracks, appearing to be fresh, inspired us with increased hopes, and we pushed vigorously on up the slope beyond, and over snow and *ures* (as these layers of stones are called), but still no reindeer could we discover. But the sun already moving round to the western heavens reminded us that we must return homewards, and, though we greatly longed to advance further, we felt that it was necessary for us to retrace our steps.

On reaching the foot of the ridge of rock, dividing the valley into upper and lower parts, we commenced the ascent of the northern side, in order that we might return home over the high ground, where it was still possible that we might fall in with reindeer. A few ptarmigan basking on the warm hill-side flew away with a loud croaking, which re-echoed among the recesses of this silent valley.

Having gained the summit of the steep slope we continued our way over the interminable *ures* of the Steensfly, for we were now upon what appears to have been mistaken for a *fjeld*, viz.: a *fly*. The Steensfly—a most appropriate name, for it was very stony — was a perfectly level tract with scarce a rise upon it. Presently we reached a glacier, which lay to the left of

our course, partially enclosed by a mighty amphitheatre of perpendicular rocks. This appeared to be a probable resort of reindeer, which frequent the sheltered parts of the mountains, where there are usually a few patches of grass to be met with. Here was again a most magnificent scene though on a somewhat smaller scale than Leirungsdal. We approached cautiously, but again disappointment was our lot; for, although there were fresh tracks upon the snow, not a single deer was visible; and the tracks, leading up to the higher rocks, afforded us no hopes of falling in with the reindeer that had been at this glacier. We therefore retraced our steps to the point whence we had diverged and continued our toil over the *ures*.

The immense quantity of loose rocks and stones which constitute these *ures* is indeed very remarkable. A great proportion may be traced to the decomposition of the rocks, but it is difficult to believe that this can be the sole cause. The origin of these *ures* may be easier explained if we concur in the opinion that Norway was once nearly covered with snow and ice, of which there is certainly much probability. This last-mentioned glacier lay on an almost flat bed, and immediately before it stretched a wide, level, *fly*. Now supposing that this glacier once extended beyond its present limit, it must have formed *moraines*, the *débris* of rock which a glacier pushes on before it; and, if to

this cause we attribute the presence of the *ures* immediately before it, may we not conjecture that the *ures* beyond the reach of this particular glacier are due to the action of glaciers, which have since disappeared? Here we come indirectly to an argument in favour of the former extension of glaciers and the depression of the snow line, within which Professor James Forbes estimates that one fourth of the surface of Norway would be placed by a diminution of only 4° in the temperature of the summer months.

Soon we came upon the slot of several reindeer, which had evidently passed in the fore part of the day. It was extremely tantalising to see so many proofs of the presence of deer in these parts, and yet to be unable to fall in with any. However they gave us hopes of better luck on another day.

The sun was now already fast declining, and the surface of the snow, which had been thawed by the warm rays, was now freezing quite hard again; and we frequently enjoyed long slides down the slopes of snow, which made a pleasant variation from the continual hopping from rock to rock. Soon we began to quit these snowy fjelds and to make our way down to the plain below. The descent was long and steep, for the elevation which we had left was very considerable. At about seven o'clock we regained the regions of vegetation, and, to our great joy, came upon a spot covered with

whortleberry plants. We were all in a half-famishing state, not having taken quite sufficient food with us, and, with one accord, fell ravenously upon the berries; and, though we picked them in handfuls, we could not gather them fast enough to satisfy our craving for food.

But a limited halt only could we make, as the huts were yet distant, and we were soon once more on the march; but now we proceeded with greater ease, and it was quite surprising that the berries could have afforded so much relief to the pangs of hunger. On our way to the river we fell in with a peasant, who had the care of a large herd of cattle. A dreary life indeed these men must lead, passing the whole of the summer in almost perfect solitude upon the mountains; yet this good fellow seemed cheerful enough and quite contented, as far as one could judge from a passing conversation.

The re-fording of the river was by no means a pleasant undertaking, for the sun had now sunk behind the western hills, and a frosty chill pervading the air caused us to feel very keenly the icy cold of the water. Nine o'clock found us once more at the huts; but to our surprise and disappointment (for we had hoped to find a good supper awaiting us) Olaf and the Provst's son had not yet returned. However we set to work with a right good will, and soon the fire was burning

with a cheerful blaze, and, coffee cooked, we refreshed ourselves with a cup of that restorative, and then prepared the more substantial part of the meal.

In another hour an excellent soup made of whole willow-grouse was set upon the rude board forming our table, and just at that moment the other party made their appearance, and fortunately for them; for, after the hard walk of thirteen hours, our appetites would probably only have been limited by the disappearance of the soup. They also had returned without any reindeer; for, though they had seen a herd of about twenty, they had not been able to get within range. But their long absence was accounted for, not by the distance they had gone, but by their having lain down and slept quietly for several hours.

Unfavourable omens ushered in the following day: the mountains were covered with thick mists and the sun showed no signs of breaking through the overhanging clouds. The project therefore of another expedition to the fjelds was abandoned; for, if we did go, there would be no possibility of seeing reindeer.

So having nothing to press us we sat down to a quiet breakfast of trout, and afterwards held a consultation as to the means of obtaining a fresh supply of bread, coffee, sugar, and candles.

A village called Bjölstad, in Hedal, about five and thirty English miles to the north-east, was the nearest

place from which these articles could be procured. First we applied to the old fisherman at the huts, but, he making a most unreasonable demand, his services were at once refused. But by good luck there happened by chance to be a man here from this very village of Bjölstad, and, having apparently no occupation, he readily consented to undertake the expedition. Having told him that we should provide the pack-pony, we required of him to state his own price. One dollar (4*s.* 6*d.*) was the reply, and with this offer we immediately closed; it being very reasonable considering that the whole distance there and back was no less than seventy miles, which could not be accomplished under three days. After receiving the instructions in writing he crossed the river with our guides and proceeded in search of the ponies, which were wandering at liberty over the hills; but soon finding them he started without delay for Bjölstad.

The supply of milk and cream was now also at a low ebb; and, there being no hopes of deer-stalking, Peter, the Provst's son, and I set off to Besse sœters, they carrying the tin camp-kettle for the milk and a couple of black bottles for the cream, while I took my gun to pick up some game on the way. But few birds could be found; and having shot three grouse I was not sorry to leave the wet birch trees and juniper bushes, and hurry on after the others to take shelter in the sœter

from the torrents of rain now falling. Here we regaled ourselves with a common sœter dish called *römme-kolle*, which is merely the thick layer of sour cream that rises to the surface of milk after it has stood for a few days. The *kolle*, or flat wooden vessel in which the milk is "set," being placed on the table, we commenced skimming off the *römme*, or *sour* cream, with the short wooden spoons used by the peasants, eating some very good flad-bröd along with it. I became quite fond of this *römme-kolle*, and found it an excellent dish to ask for at sœters, or farms where cows are kept, being always forthcoming in a very short time.

It was Saturday and Marit was very busy with butter-making, and scrubbing up the emptied *kolle* in order that all might be clean and tidy for the next day. A little girl of about thirteen was Marit's helpmate, to whom was allotted the duty of churning. The churn in this sœter was a tall conical-shaped wooden machine, the butter being made by working up and down a long stick with a thick perforated piece of wood at the end. Much to the amusement of Marit I also tried my hand at the churning, but found that it required considerable skill and practice to give the piston the proper spiral turn, and also to prevent the cream from spurting out at the top: under these circumstances I speedily relinquished the butter-making to the more experienced hands of the little girl.

Leaving Marit's sœter we next paid a visit to an adjoining one, under the care of a budeier named Sigeri; she was an older person than Marit, but, like all the women of Norway, remarkably cheerful and good-humoured. With Sigeri also we had opened commercial transactions, and between the two sœters we divided our patronage, getting milk, butter, &c., sometimes from one and sometimes from the other.

At last we set out on our return home well laden with the produce of the sœters. On reaching the summit of the hill overlooking the river, our attention was suddenly arrested by three large, red, things spread out upon the ground by the huts. What could they be? Presently one of the peasants solved the mystery by holding up to us the head of a reindeer with its branching antlers, and we knew at once that those things upon the ground were the fresh skins of three reindeer. Eager to learn where, and by whom, the deer had been killed, we ran rapidly down the steep, and, pulling across the river, hastened up to the huts.

Old Joh, accompanied by the two occupants of the other huts, had proceeded on the previous day to the further end of the Gjendin Söen on a fishing expedition. Their rifles were, of course, taken with them; and, thinking it just possible that they might meet with reindeer, they had climbed the precipice overhanging the lake. No sooner had they gained the high ground

above than they discovered three reindeer, and, a short stalk bringing them within range, a fine buck fell to each rifle. This morning, as soon as they had brought the deer down from the fjelds and placed them in the boats, they returned home to the huts, and were now very busy cutting up the venison; Joh stowing away his share in salting-tubs in the boat-house, while the others were making preparations for an early departure on the morrow.

"What are you looking for so carefully in your reindeer, Joh?" said my companion.

"Do you not remember your giving me a bullet one day last autumn?"

"Yes, I do; but what of that?"

"Well, you know I said that the next reindeer I shot should fall by that very bullet,—and so it has; and I will now show it to you as a proof that I have not broken my word."

"Ah! here it is," said he, as he picked it out in great glee and gave it to my friend.

The arrival of the venison was most acceptable to us; for, although an abundance of feathered game might always be easily procured, some more substantial food was very welcome. Poor Shot too, as the supply was only barely enough for our consumption, was not faring very well, and for his sake alone we were glad of the venison. At the same time, however, I am

ashamed to confess that we almost felt vexed at these peasants having met with such extreme good luck at the cost of so little trouble; while we, who had toiled for a long day of thirteen hours, had not so much as *seen* a reindeer. We selected for our own use a good piece of venison and also the tongues, which are but little esteemed by the peasants; for all of which, as they absolutely refused to accept payment, we remunerated them by filling their flasks with English gunpowder—an article highly valued by the sporting peasants, and most valuable for the purpose of gaining their goodwill; on which account I had no cause to regret having brought from England rather more powder than I was able to make use of.

During our absence my companion had been fishing in the river, and with tolerable success, having caught several fine trout. The remainder of the afternoon was spent in fishing and collecting a good supply of firewood; and by me in particular in constructing a wooden candlestick which could be attached to the window-sill without employing any nails or pegs—a point on which old Joh was very particular. The candlestick was at last produced, and the simple contrivance was much admired by Joh, when he found what a comfort it was that the tallow dip did not fall down every five minutes, leaving one suddenly in the dark—perhaps at a critical moment in some cooking

operation. Birch trees grew here in abundance, but, being at an altitude of 3246 E. feet above the sea, we were above the limit of fir trees. The limit of the birch might be estimated at about 300 feet above the Gjendin, and the snow line at rather more than 2000 feet. Trout with fried reindeer's liver as the *pièce de résistance* formed our evening meal.

Next day being Sunday, the forenoon was spent at home. Although the orthodox Sunday dinner of roast beef and plum pudding was beyond our means, we hoped nevertheless to spread the festive board with no despicable banquet; and towards mid-day a large lump of venison, together with plenty of fat, was put into the iron pot. The cooking of the venison engaged considerable attention, and constant employment was afforded to one person in basting and turning over the meat. When nearly done a quantity of cream was poured over it to improve it and to add to the richness of the gravy.

It is much in this way that the Cossacks of Siberia cook their game, according to our great Siberian traveller, Mr. Atkinson. The birds are placed whole, together with an abundance of fat, into a strong pot, which is then covered over with a closely fitting lid; and, the joining of the lid being smeared round with clay to make it air-tight, the pot is hung over the fire, and in about twenty minutes the game is cooked to

perfection; and thus prepared Mr. Atkinson says game is preferable to that cooked by any other method.

Certainly our venison was most excellent, and I never remember to have tasted either red or fallow-deer venison that could compare with it. Reindeer venison more nearly resembles red-deer than fallow-deer venison, but it is more juicy and tender. During the feast Marit and Sigeri arrived on their Sunday visit, according to the custom of the country, but they declined our invitation to join us at dinner. Old Joh, however, who made his appearance just then did not refuse a good offer; and, sitting down with us, did ample justice to the venison, which he declared to be excellent, and when he had finished returned us "*Mange* tak for maden" (*many* thanks for food). Fortunately we were not under the obligation of inviting the two men who had been Joh's companions at the successful hunt; for they had left the same morning for their homes in Hedal, about forty miles distant, taking with them their ponies laden with the reindeer venison.

The sole object of the peasants of Norway in shooting is to provide themselves with food for the winter. A reindeer hunter quitting home, with his pony laden with a supply of provisions, starts off to the mountains, where he remains for a week or a fortnight till he has killed one or possibly, if he has met with good luck, two reindeer. Without loss of time the venison is

packed in the klövsadel, and the hunter returns to his home in the valley, and immediately on arrival consigns the whole of the meat to the salting-tub. Then, if there be nothing to detain him in the valley, he starts afresh to the fjelds on another expedition, returning home as soon as he has again been successful in the hunt.

Norwegian peasants have a great predilection for salt meat, and, rather than eat fish, flesh, or fowl in a fresh state, they consign it, if the means be at hand, to the salting-tub; and, if after the lapse of some months it comes out in a semi-putrid state, it is most highly prized. They have an insuperable aversion to unsalted butter, and would rather go without it altogether than eat it unsalted.

The departure of the two men with their venison was by no means regretted; for to begin with, we did not exactly like their appearance, and they also added considerably to the demolition of our provisions, having a cunning habit of invariably paying us a visit when coffee was going on, which, out of mere civility, we were obliged to offer them; and, considering that to procure it cost a walk of seventy miles, it may be imagined how great was its value.

After dinner we walked to the Besse sœters, and returned the visits of Marit and Sigeri. The walk there and back, being only six miles, was merely

considered as an afternoon's stroll. On our return to the huts we found a great addition to the society, several men having lately arrived from the further end of the Gjendin. They were all fishing in the river in a most enthusiastic manner. One or two were standing in the middle of the stream almost up to their waists in the water; but with all their ardour they did not appear to be more successful than their less excited brethren who contented themselves with fishing from the river-bank. We also tried our skill as we were in want of food for supper, and were fortunate in catching three or four very large trout.

Early in the evening we retired to rest, in order that we might be ready to start in good time next morning: for the weather was promising, and the men, who had come from the further end of the Gjendin, had seen several reindeer ascend the cliffs about three miles from the lake.

CHAP. X.

A beautiful Morning. — Rude Hut. — Splendid Panorama.—Reindeer at last!—They vanish.—Reindeer Flowers.—Glaciers.—A rough Scramble.—Grand Amphitheatre.—Roaming Habits of Reindeer.—Not dull of Sight.—Will not cross human Footsteps.—Come suddenly upon Reindeer.—Canter up the Precipice.—Disappointments.—An ancient Rifle.—Moltebeer.—Endurance of old Job.

THE expectations, which we had formed from the appearance of the evening sky, were fully realised, and early in the morning all was life and bustle to get the breakfast cooked, and then to start for the fjelds. Soon after six Peter and I embarked in the boat on our expedition in search of the reindeer which had been seen on the previous day. Leaving Peter, for some time, to row alone, I sat in the stern of the boat enjoying the scenery, and making a sketch of the lake. The morning was beautiful, not a cloud was visible, and the clear blue sky seemed almost to vie in depth of transparency with that of a southern clime. The sun shone bright and clear, and, striking with the full resplendence of its eastern rays upon the solemn cliffs, the

green waters of the lake, and the glittering snow-clad peaks in the distance, rendered the scene one of superb magnificence.

For about an hour Peter and I pulled cheerfully along over the calm waters of Gjendin, and, just after passing the rocks over which the river from Leirungsdal falls into the lake, ran the boat ashore, and, making it fast to the rocks, climbed up the mossy slope from the water's edge. Here stood a small stone hut of Peter's construction; it was sometimes used as a shooting-box, and was furnished with the few requirements of a mountain life, viz.: an iron pot, a wooden spoon, and a coffee-mill. Our object of entering was to see if the coffee-mill were safe in the hut as we purposed taking it back with us.

Leaving this cabin we commenced the ascent of the western side of the valley, through which the river from Leirungsdal rolled rapidly along. The mountains rose very abruptly in a steep precipice of massive rock, leaving but one way of access to the heights above. Over broken rocks, and slippery water-courses we scrambled up, and soon had left all vegetation, except grass and mosses, far beneath us. Presently we reached a patch of snow, and there we saw the tracks of reindeer, evidently of those that the men had seen on the previous day.

A very rough scramble of about two thousand feet

brought us to the summit of the precipice overhanging the lake; and, as we emerged from the gully which had hitherto precluded all view, a splendid panorama opened upon us. At our feet lay the sea-green lake of Gjendin, hemmed in by frowning walls of perpendicular rock. Its waters were traversed by none but the boats of the fisherman, the reindeer-hunter, or the mountain shepherd. Above the opposite precipice of the lake, the ground, from the distance, and large scale of the scenery, seeming to be smooth and gently undulating, was apparently clothed with a rich, unbroken, carpet of reindeer-moss; but in reality it was as rugged and barren as the rocks on which we were standing. Often did I gaze attentively upon the peculiar colouring of the reindeer-moss, endeavouring to decide what the colour was; but so exquisitely are the tints blended that it was impossible to arrive at the conclusion of whether it were green or yellow. Here and there among the rocks the glassy surface of a mountain tarn threw back the brilliant rays of a beaming sun. Beyond this again the mountains began to lift their giant forms, and large fields of snow and ice covered the more level rocks; and in some parts the glaciers extended in wide expanse out of the very highest parts of the mountains. Out of the glaciers shot sharp and jagged peaks, which, stretching in a wide curve from north to west, stood out in dark contrast to the white

fields of snow and ice, and the clear transparency of the azure sky.

But time would not permit us to linger, and we pushed on over the barren rocks straining our eyes, as we proceeded, in search of reindeer. Yet, stop!—what are those dark forms up yonder against the clear sky? Reindeer!—those "antlered monarchs of the waste," a glimpse of which among their native wilds had so long been the object of my ambition. Four in all, upon a ridge of rock about half a mile distant, they stood quietly cropping the scanty grass. Sinking slowly down to elude observation we surveyed the ground before us and consulted as to the way in which we should stalk the deer. The extreme stillness of the air was our difficulty,—not a breath could be felt, a blade of grass held up to be swayed by the breeze remained immovable.

To discover the direction of the wind was impossible; and, deciding to stalk as the ground best favoured us, we began to move slowly and cautiously towards the deer. Watching all their movements our eyes remained fixed upon them—now they raise their heads and look around—stop! not a muscle must move—again they commence feeding, and once more we creep cautiously on. The ground rising steadily and being much broken, there was no difficulty in concealing ourselves from view. We had already approached to within 300

yards, but now we could see only one reindeer; but the others might have moved and become hidden by intervening rocks, and we doubted not but that they were still there. The ground now rose rapidly, and we found that, by making a slight circuit, we should be able to arrive within a short distance of the deer. Silently and cautiously we crept along, in momentary dread of a loose stone rolling from under our feet and alarming the deer by the clatter.

At length the critical moment arrived,—the desired spot was reached,—and breathless with excitement, our rifles ready in our hands, we slowly raised our heads above the rocks.

But the reindeer? — they are gone — the bare rocks are as desolate and devoid of life as ever. Was it possible that we could have seen four reindeer standing on that very spot? or, was it a dream? all is silence! all is desolate! nothing but barren gray rocks and sparkling snow greet the eye as it wanders anxiously around. Can any living creature exist on such a dreary tract? But no — it was not a dream; for there were fresh tracks upon the scanty moss, and stalks of the reindeer-plant (*Ranunculus glacialis*) had just been nipped of their flowers. The rocks, the snow, the glacier which lay within half a mile, were surveyed; but, alas, in vain, nothing living could be seen.

On gaining the spot where the deer had stood, a

fresh breeze blew in our faces, only serving to increase the mystery. But a very short experience of deer-stalking among such lofty mountains convinces one of the extraordinary changes of direction to which the wind is liable. A moment before it had possibly blown in exactly the contrary direction, thereby giving "the wind" of us to the deer, which would be quite sufficient to put them to rapid flight. So completely hidden from their sight had we been, that thus only could we account for their sudden disappearance. No footmarks could be left on the hard and barren rocks, and we could gain no clue as to the direction the deer had taken.

Still, incited by the bare possibility of their having gone but a short distance, we pushed on up the hill, and, on reaching the summit, looked down a perpendicular precipice of some hundred feet upon the Steensflybræen, a glacier which we had passed on our first day's expedition. From this commanding position we could see far and wide over trackless rocks and snow; but no reindeer were in sight. Thoroughly disappointed we turned back and struck away to the left to examine the glacier lying near to where the deer had been standing. Enclosed on two sides by high perpendicular walls of rock, and a quiet, sheltered, spot, it was a probable place for reindeer to frequent; and, supposing that these deer had not taken alarm, but had merely moved away for change of pasturage, it was

here that we entertained the hope of finding them. But again we were disappointed, for no traces of reindeer were visible, and we now no longer doubted but that the deer, having "got the wind" of us, had at once gallopped off, and by this time might be six or eight miles distant.

Partially to console ourselves we sat down upon the rocks, and commenced our dinner which we carried in our pockets; for, although it was still early, the long row and walk had considerably sharpened our appetites. A fresh, boiled, reindeer's tongue constituted my repast, and most excellent it was. The air was delightfully cool and refreshing, and so invigorating that, after our meal, we felt as though we could undergo any amount of exertion; and so warm were the rays of the sun that, although the altitude was probably over 5000 feet, we did not feel the slightest chilliness.

On rising up from dinner we made for the lower end of the glacier which lay before us and crossed a *lateral moraine*, or pile of *débris* brought down by the glacier; it was much beyond the present limit of the glacier, but I am sorry to say that I did not make more detailed observations. The rocks just here were of a slaty nature, and I was struck by the great decomposition which was wearing them away. We now clambered along the side of the mountain, which, at this point, left only a comparatively narrow tract between its perpendicular

face and the precipice overhanging the lake. In some places the water, which trickled over the rocks, had been congealed by the last night's frost, rendering the walking both difficult and dangerous; for, although a fall would not have been attended by a further descent into the lake, it was quite possible to sustain serious injury by falling upon the sharp rocks from a height of only a few feet.

At length after a long and arduous scramble, our rifles being slung behind our backs to leave both hands at liberty, we rounded the mountain, and, in a short time, found ourselves at *Kjærnhullet* (tarn-hollow). The spot was one of most striking and peculiar grandeur: an oval amphitheatre of perpendicular rock enclosed a large convex-shaped glacier which entirely filled the hollow; and at the foot of the ice-field the little tarn, or *kjærn*, fed a torrent which, dashing its impetuous stream over the edge of the precipice, fell headlong into the Gjendin Söen below. The only entrance to this noble amphitheatre was from the north, or the Gjendin side, by which way we had come. A grand and awful scene it was,— so still, so calm; one seemed to have been transported to a region wholly unconnected with an inhabited world.

Such a sheltered spot was a very probable place of resort for reindeer, especially as an abundance of grass grew on the slope of rock between the perpendicular

cliffs and the field of ice. Grass and the flowers of the reindeer-plant constitute the food of reindeer during the summer months, but while the ground is covered with snow their only food is the greenish-yellow lichen called reindeer-moss, which they procure by scraping away the snow with their feet and the short, palmated, horns, which project down their face between their eyes. Where this moss abounds the deer congregate in vast herds, amounting sometimes to as many as two thousand. But in the summer time they are seldom to be found in larger herds than twenty or thirty: while three or four is the usual number which roam about together.

In the summer time, provided the weather be fine, they frequent the mountains at about the level of the snow line, which, in this part of Norway, is rather above 5000 English feet above the sea. Here they roam about in undisputed possession of the boundless fjelds, seeking the hollows formed by the rocks, and other sheltered spots, in quest of grass which is usually more abundant in such places; and there they may generally be found during the middle of the day, quietly dozing in the warm sunshine. Though not migratory animals, as has been said, which my own experience and the information derived from the peasants would tend to confute, they are constantly on the move, always travelling against the wind; so much so that a

systematic reindeer-hunter would, if the wind continued to blow from one quarter for any length of time, move off against the wind and take up his quarters in those parts of the mountains, to which he would conclude that the reindeer had betaken themselves.

In winter and in stormy weather the deer descend from the higher regions to the more sheltered and genial districts, though never below the level of birch trees. At all times they are extremely wary and difficult of approach, but especially when they are lying down; for then, their attention being undistracted, their eyes, ears, and noses, are fully on the alert to apprise them of danger. Should the hunter meet with them when lying down on unfavourable ground he may often be obliged to wait patiently till the hour of feeding, which is either early in the morning, at midday, or at about five in the evening; for then the deer rise up to graze.

The author of "Scandinavian Adventures" remarks that the reindeer is dull of sight; were this the case experienced hunters would be less cautious about approaching them when lying down; and the above author bases his conclusion on the fact of reindeer, when shot at, running away for a short distance and then turning round to stare at the place whence the report proceeded. The red-deer does precisely the same, and the habits of this animal are too well known,

for dulness of sight to be imputed to it. With reindeer as well as with red-deer the cause of their stopping to look round is sometimes mere curiosity, but more often is that they may see their enemy in order to know in which direction to run for safety. But there is this difference: the reindeer, inhabiting as it does regions almost untrodden by human footsteps, is unaccustomed to the sight of man, and may, perhaps, stop rather long to look at his antagonist; while the red-deer, knowing full well that man is his deadly enemy, makes off the moment he catches sight of him.

Reindeer appear to have a great dread of crossing human footmarks. A few winters ago Peter and another man, as they were returning from the fjelds, saw a herd of reindeer going in such a direction as would lead them directly across their line of footmarks in the snow: steadily they continued onwards, but of a sudden they seemed to be alarmed — they had seen the tracks — and, wheeling abruptly round, they started off in full gallop back in the direction whence they had come.

For stalking reindeer it is necessary to walk very slowly when the elevation, at which reindeer may be found, has been attained; for, the ground being so much broken, it is more than probable that a fast walker, coming suddenly upon deer, will be unable to stop, or sink down, soon enough to avoid detection.

Great difficulty in stalking is often occasioned by the impossibility of making a circuit, as, owing to precipices and cliffs of rock, there is frequently only one way of approaching the deer.

On reaching Kjœrnhullet we crept along the steep slope on the eastern side of the glacier, when suddenly two bucks, starting up from among the rocks before us, made off at a brisk canter. Their movements were the very image of gracefulness, as, with heads erect and necks almost bending beneath the great weight of their branching antlers, they bounded over the rocks. A low whistle from Peter, exciting their curiosity, caused the deer to make a momentary halt. Already they were nearly two hundred yards distant, and, with the hasty aim which was necessary, we entertained but small hopes of success.

The report of both rifles re-echoed throughout the amphitheatre of rocks; but, alas! without effect; and the deer in another bound were hidden by the masses of rock on the broken slope. Quickly ramming down another cartridge, I cried "*færdig!*" (ready); "*Tag op paa Bræen!*" (take up on to the glacier) replied Peter, and, rushing headlong down the rocky slope, I clambered over the lateral *moraine* and gained the surface of the glacier. By this manœuvre we should be able to cut off the deer if, as was probable, they should attempt to cross the glacier at the upper end, so as to make their

escape back to the northern, or open, end by galloping round the other side of the ice.

Turning round, in the hopes of seeing the deer, I found that I was almost blinded to everything off the ice, and nothing remained but to hurry on with all speed to the further end of the glacier. But was it safe to rush headlong over the glacier? might not a *crevasse*, or fissure, hidden by an unsound covering of snow engulf one?—but such misgivings were quickly dispelled by the excitement, and, hoping for the best, I started off at a rapid pace. Fortunately not a *crevasse* came in my way, and at last I reached a commanding position near the upper end of the glacier.

But the reindeer should now be approaching, and I ran my eye eagerly over the rocks by the side of the glacier;—still they came not—they had not crossed the ice—and where could they have gone to?—to ascend the perpendicular cliffs seemed an utter impossibility. At last I caught sight of Peter, standing far back upon an eminence of rock; in another instant he raised his rifle, a bright flash followed and a dull report resounded throughout the hollow. But still, where were the reindeer? Peter had pointed his rifle upwards, and I eagerly scanned the towering cliffs. The reindeer were cantering steadily up the precipice, their little white tails bobbing up and down as they leapt upwards from rock to rock. I stood wonder-

stricken;—to ascend those walls of rock appeared to be a perfect impossibility even for a man, still more so for a large animal like a reindeer. Higher and higher they went, never slackening their pace; and at length the summit was gained, and we saw the last of these reindeer as they disappeared against the sky-line.

Such are the fortunes of reindeer-hunting,—a most uncertain, but at the same time a most exciting and interesting sport. For who can fail to enjoy watching these noble animals among their grand and savage haunts? No one who has experienced it can deny the extreme pleasure of wandering over untrodden regions of unrivalled beauty, and gaining an insight into the habits of such an interesting animal, living in a state wholly uninfluenced by any inroads of civilisation.

Descending from the glacier I scrambled back over the rocks to where Peter was standing, anxious to learn how the deer had succeeded in making their escape. For a short distance the reindeer had skirted the edge of the glacier, but seeing me upon the ice, though I was prevented by the intense glare from discerning them, they had turned to the left and commenced the ascent of the precipice. Peter, detained by the intricate process of loading his rifle, had not been able to keep pace with the deer, so as to cause them to take to the glacier, where I was stationed; and to this may be attributed our failure.

With the exception of the peasants of Guldbransdalen having reached the refinement of using a measure for powder, the loading of a rifle is almost as complicated here as in the Hardanger district. Some of these powder measures, in shape like a cylindrical needle-case, are made, as Joh's was, of solid silver, but more usually of reindeer horn, and are frequently very pretty little articles. A Norwegian peasant's rifle is a long and ponderous weapon, usually carrying a ball of about twenty-five to the pound; it is poly-grooved, and with a rapid twist, the grooves making sometimes two or three whole turns in the barrel. Such an one was Peter's antiquated weapon, which, however, was not his own property, for he seemed to go shares in it with another peasant. The date upon it was 1747, notwithstanding which it shot well, but it was only adapted for short ranges.

The advanced hour of the day would not allow of our proceeding further; and, after fully discussing our various disappointments, we retraced our steps round the face of the mountain, over the slippery watercourses, and down the gully in the rocks, and at last reached the spot where the boat was moored.

Here our departure was delayed by the pleasant discovery of a quantity of whortleberries and a few *molte-beer*. The *Molte-beer* (*Rubus chamæmorus*) grows at the end of an upright stalk shooting out from the centre of

the plant, whose graceful leaves, not unlike those of the strawberry, spread themselves in a compact circle upon the rocky ground. The berry itself, which is about the size of a raspberry, in structure much resembles the mulberry: the colour is a very pale orange, and the *beer* (berry) has a peculiar flavour, something similar to that of a rotten medlar. The flower is white, and shaped like an anemone, and is developed from a round and tight bud of about the size of the fruit. In the northern parts of Norway these berries grow in great abundance, and are sent down to the south in barrels. I have also seen them in the Highlands of Scotland, but only to a very limited extent. Eaten raw with plenty of milk they form an excellent dish.

The declining sun at length warned us of the fast approach of evening, and, quitting the refreshing fruit upon the mossy bank by the water-side, we re-embarked in the boat and pulled away down the lake towards the huts. As we reached them a rose-coloured gleam from the western heavens was shedding a soft light upon the snowy peaks, and the calm waters of Gjendin were glittering in the last bright rays of the waning sun.

During supper the exploits of the various parties were successively recounted. Old Joh had accompanied my companion to Leirungsdal, but they had met with a like want of success as had characterised our former

day over the same ground. Ascending the steep slope of the glacier they had explored the innermost recesses of the ice-clad rocks. The strength, endurance, and presence of mind at critical moments, displayed by Joh were quite wonderful; and, notwithstanding the fatigues of so arduous a day, the old hunter of three-score and ten was as fresh and lively as any of the party.

After a hearty supper of reindeer venison we gladly retired to our hammocks and couches of hay — rough resting-places indeed, but none the less welcome after the exertions of the day.

CHAP. XI.

A Day in the Hut.—Originality of Joh.—His Whims.—"Quad sai ou?"—Reindeer again.—A hard Run.—Hail Storm.—Velling.—Pack-Horses for Christiania.—Joh, a Bear Hunter.—A late Return.—Primitive Remedies.—Light marching Order.—A dangerous Climb.—Three Reindeer.—A difficult Stalk.—Hiding the Deer.—Rus Vand.—The Stone Hut.—Difficulties of cooking.—A rusty Pot.—A Plank for a Bed.

EARLY in the morning the rain had fallen in torrents, and the clouds which still hung over the mountain tops would not allow of an expedition in search of reindeer. However, it was rather pleasant to sit down leisurely to our breakfast of trout fresh from the lake, and marrow from the leg-bones of the reindeer.

There being no particular object in view to entice us out, we rather preferred remaining at home, and devoting ourselves to the domestic operations of gun-cleaning and collecting fire-wood; while the guides found ample occupation in mending their boots. All Norwegian peasants are their own shoemakers and tailors, and never think of going on such an expedition as this without their implements for cobbling, and a

supply of spare leather. Writing my journal formed part of my occupation on a day like this, at which old Joh seemed much amused, and wondered how I could write so fast; for, though he could read with perfect facility, writing was not one of his accomplishments.

Joh was a man of considerable talent in his own way, and above all was a most ingenious workman; the hut in which we were living, as also the boat-house and every article of furniture, was of his own handiwork; in fact, he made almost everything he required. His rifles were of his own manufacture, but he still retained the old flint-and-steel locks, holding the percussion system in great contempt; and even if a rifle were given to him he would immediately alter the locks to the old plan.

Five consecutive years, both winter and summer, he had once passed in this little hut, and indeed it seemed to be a pet residence of his. His constant dread was lest the floor or walls of his hut should be soiled or injured in any way; and, when he was present, we were always scrupulously careful not to place the cooking utensil upon the floor. An anecdote referring to this peculiarity was told me by the other peasants. A friend of his, who was once staying with him in his hut, happening, while occupied in cooking, to take the pot off the fire, placed it upon the floor, and a black mark was left where it had stood. The old hunter was

much displeased, but without saying a word he repaired to the boat-house, and, fetching a plane, shaved off the blackened part of the wood. When anything was soiled, in preference to washing or scrubbing, Joh invariably had recourse to his plane.

Notwithstanding all his whims he was a charming old man,—so thoroughly straightforward and honest. Though the Norwegians have really a great esteem for their own property, they never show it to strangers; on the contrary they always depreciate what is their own. Old Joh one day, referring to me, remarked: "What do you think *Engelskman's* friends would say if they knew that he was living in such a cabin? When he gets home I have no doubt he will tell them what a detestable little hovel mine is." This I stoutly denied, telling him that I should say on the contrary what a neat little house it had been my good fortune to meet with, and how I had enjoyed my sojourn there. The old man's countenance lighted up as I praised his hut, and he smiled in acknowledgment of the compliment.

It was amusing to listen to the conversation of the peasants as they worked away at their shoes. One of them would make a remark or ask a question, and the person addressed would immediately answer in old Norse "*Quad sai ou?*" (spelled according to sound)—(What say you?). The remark would then be repeated

by the first speaker, who, in his turn would ask, "*Quad sai ou?*" obliging the other to repeat his answer. Thus they ramble on, almost every question, answer, or remark, being repeated. *Quad sai ou*, spoken quickly, sounds exactly like the name of Kossuth, the Hungarian; and hearing, as I thought, his name so often repeated, I at last inquired why Kossuth engrossed the conversation so much.

The inveterate habit of tobacco-chewing, which prevails among the Norsk peasants, by no means enhances the pleasures of in-door life. Neither by day nor by night is the Norwegian peasant without his "quid," the consequences of which, seeing that they render a pair of waterproof slippers a *sine quâ non*, may be better imagined than described. In such a small hut this habit was an intolerable nuisance, and my companion and I succeeded, though with much difficulty, in putting some check upon the practice.

A walk to Besse sœters for a fresh supply of milk and cream passed the afternoon; and on the way there I shot seven willow-grouse. Our home-dairy was a small harbour in the river made of stones, and there the milk-can and cream-bottles were immersed, and their contents kept good by the icy-cold water which flowed out of the Gjendin.

To our great disappointment rain was falling heavily next morning, filling us with desponding thoughts, and,

above all, bringing before us visions of another day's shoemaking in the hut. However, towards noon, the weather cleared up sufficiently to warrant an expedition to the fjelds; and, crossing the river, we commenced the ascent of the opposite cliffs.

As we were toiling up the steep rocks, the three Norsemen deep in conversation, two dark forms, upon the rocks above, suddenly caught my eye. A glance sufficed to show them to be reindeer, and the chatter of the natives was quickly silenced. The deer, after looking over the precipice for a moment, turned away, and vanished as suddenly as they had appeared. The wind, blowing from the south, left but little doubt as to the course to be pursued, and, in another instant, we were hurrying on towards the further side of the mountain, in order that, on reaching the summit of the cliffs, we might proceed "up wind" to the spot where the deer had been seen.

Keeping the wind in our faces, when the high ground was gained, we made our way over the barren rocks. Soon we were carefully descending a steep slope, which shelved away towards where the deer would probably be; when, by a simultaneous impulse, we all sank slowly to the ground. At about two hundred yards' distance the two bucks were walking quietly one behind the other. But as quickly as our hopes had been raised were they dispelled; for the reindeer, in

another instant, appeared to catch sight of us, and, turning short round, made off at a canter towards the boundless fjelds behind. One chance of success yet remained, but that was a small one. However, away we went, rushing headlong down the broken slope at the imminent risk of breaking our legs, and, reaching the gully below, ran along it as fast as possible in hopes of cutting off the deer. But all was in vain; when we reached the desired point the deer had gone past, and could nowhere be seen.

Once more then we experienced the frequent disappointments attendant on reindeer-stalking; but hope carried us on, and we soon started afresh. We now separated, Peter and I descending to the outlet of the Bes Vand, or *Vatn* as the peasants call water; while the others pursued their way along the ridge of rock overlooking the Gjendin Söen. On reaching the extremity of the Bes Vand, we forded the stream by which the lake discharges its transparent waters, and then continued northwards over the rocks, but without seeing any reindeer; and the only living things that came across our path were one or two ptarmigan, and a flock of birds, with long, pointed, wings, which were unknown to me; but the name, which Peter gave them, commencing with *fjeld* showed them to be natives of the lofty heights.

No tracks, no freshly-cropped reindeer-flowers, or

other signs of deer frequenting these parts were seen; and a heavy hail-storm coming on confirmed our half-made resolve of returning home. The hail, driven by the sweeping blast, beat hard against our faces, giving us a foretaste of the inclemency of the wintry weather on these lofty mountains; and the desolate expanse of the surrounding fjelds assumed, under the darkening sky, a still more inhospitable aspect. The Bes Vand, whose soft, clear, waters reposed calmly in its shelving bed of rock, was the sole object upon which to fix one's gaze, and fall for the time into semi-oblivion of the dreary waste around. Re-fording the torrent we commenced a descent from the fjelds, and soon regained the regions of vegetation; and, in a short time, were once more on the banks of the Sjo Elv.

During our absence my companion had been well employed in replenishing the larder with trout and willow-grouse. Towards dark a tremendous fall of rain came on, which, continuing throughout the greater part of the night, caused us some little apprehension; but, fortunately, the roof proved to be sufficiently well constructed to keep out the wet, and our slumbers were undisturbed.

Next morning the mountain peaks no longer shot up in dark masses, for a sparkling garb of snow had overspread their summits. This was the first snow of the season (1st September), and it showed that we had

already bidden farewell to summer, and that bad weather might now be expected. The fjelds bore a forbidding aspect, and dark, ominous, clouds disclosed not so much as a speck of blue sky.

The afternoon, then, found us strolling towards the sœters, in quest of a fresh supply of milk and cream. This time Marit made us a peculiar kind of porridge called *velling*. It was made with milk and barley-meal, and was very good, bearing some resemblance to Scotch porridge. Marit said that she had seen a reindeer swim across the lake during the forenoon, which showed that the badness of the weather had caused a disturbance among the deer. As we were looking out of the sœter a long file of men and pack-horses appeared in the distance, slowly making towards the sœters. Such a novel sight caused all eyes to be fixed upon the caravan. As they approached the excitement became intense, and many were the speculations indulged in. At last to our dismay we made out that Blaker, the son of the proprietor of one of the Smaadal sœters, rode at the head of the party. If only he should be coming to stay here, how shall we supply him with food and house-room!

Nothing could have exceeded our relief when, after a short conversation, Blaker turned his horse's head towards the lake, and the whole troop of attendants followed; soon we could see them fording the Sjo Elv,

and in a short time they were lost in the distance, as they pursued their way to Christiania on matters of business. This would be our last visit to the sœters, and so we settled accounts with Marit and Sigeri; then bidding a last farewell we returned to the shores of the Gjendin.

Much doubt as to the plans of the day were caused next morning by the unsettled state of the weather. But at last my companion, Peter, and I, set out for a valley, called Sikkildal, some miles to the east,—a part of the country which we had not yet visited. Many willow-grouse rose before us as we wandered through the birch woods by the banks of the Sjo Elv, but armed only with rifles, we left them in safety.

For a moment we were startled by the appearance of a herd of quadrupeds at a distance. As we drew nearer we found that they were ponies, which were wandering at large over the mountains. So tame were they that they allowed us to approach quite close, and even to pat them; by the brands we perceived that their owners lived at Lillehammer — a large town on the Christiania and Thondhjem road, and distant about sixty or seventy miles.

On reaching an eminence, a short distance beyond, we looked down upon Sikkildal, winding far into the heart of the mountains. Thick fir woods clothed the steep sides, while a narrow lake wound a serpentine course

along the vale. These woods are much frequented by bears, and in this very dale old Joh had waged successful warfare against them, and one evening had killed two large bears.

Unfortunately, driving storms of snow and hail rolled, in quick succession, over the mountains, debarring us from ascending to the more lofty fjelds. Long and anxiously did we watch the angry skies, hoping that the dense clouds might eventually pass away and give place to a clear sunshine. But no,— the mists only grew thicker, and storm after storm swept the dreary fjelds. Returning home, therefore, we devoted ourselves to the more homely pursuits of fishing and willow-grouse shooting, much to the joy of Shot, who was always imprisoned in the hut when we were away after reindeer. Two brace and a half of willow-grouse having fallen to the gun, we were in no lack of food for a good supper.

The two others had not returned when we sat down to our willow-grouse soup, and as evening drew on, and still they appeared not, we became rather anxious for their safety on account of the storminess of the weather. Ten o'clock came and still they had not yet returned; but, as we were in total ignorance of the direction they had taken, we were quite unable to be of any use to them; and consequently retired to rest, hoping that it might be the death of a reindeer which

had detained them. At length, however, at eleven o'clock the door opened and they both entered the hut: the cause of their delay was readily explained, when we learned that the Provst's son had sprained his ankle very severely, — so much so that it was only with great difficulty that he had been able to drag himself home. They also had not met with any sport, having only seen a reindeer-calf; but they had been more fortunate in the weather, which with them had been very tolerable. They were much surprised at the news of our intended departure on the morrow,—a move which though contemplated for some time previously, had only been hastily determined upon.

During the night our medicinal resources were put to the test; for my friend was suddenly seized with violent spasms. Hot applications in the shape of iron plates, heated by a fire hastily kindled, were resorted to, and fortunately with success; and a cup of cold water was suggested as an additional restorative. Opening the door I stole down to the river-side,—the night was beautifully still, and not a sound greeted my ears save the rush of the icy river as it hurried along over its rocky bed. Happily all went well after the draught of cold water, which was an intense relief to me; as, in a region so remote from all help, an illness would have been a very serious matter.

The sun was shining brightly when we rose next

morning, and Peter and I at once commenced preparations for departure. I was now to bid my last farewell to my good friend, who, at so much inconvenience to himself, had altered his plans in order to accompany me to the fjelds. Throughout the whole time that we had travelled together I had found him a most delightful companion, always cheerful and happy; and to his kindness I felt myself entirely indebted for this latter part of my tour, with which my most vivid and pleasant recollections are associated. It will not therefore be surprising that I should take leave of him with feelings of deep regret, especially as this was our final parting: for, while I was to remain on the mountains with Peter, he was to return to Lom, whence he intended to travel direct to Christiania, and thence to Germany.

To old Joh we owed a debt of gratitude for so kindly accommodating us in his hut; for this he refused to accept the smallest payment, but luckily we were able to make him a few trifling presents, such as a pound or two of English gunpowder and a small telescope, all of which he appeared to value highly.

My horse we resolved to send back to Lom, it being my intention to make straight for the Christiania road whenever I should quit the mountains; and so I left my baggage to be conveyed, together with Shot, to the Ruslien sœters, and there deposited to await my arrival. The way to our future quarters leading over

most difficult ground, our equipment was very small, and consisted only of our knapsack well stocked with flad-bröd, *mys ost* — a yellow goat's cheese — a piece of raw bacon, some sugar, coffee, and one or two bits of tallow candle. Besides this we each of us carried a rifle; and thus prepared we walked down to the river, over which old Joh ferried us in the little boat.

On reaching the summit we walked along over the rough stones, by the edge of a precipice overhanging the lake of Gjendin. Gradually the wedge of table-land, bounded to the south by the precipices of the Gjendin and those of the Bes Vand to the north, contracted to a narrow point called Beseggen. Before us, as we stood at the angle of the wedge, the sharp side of it or *eggen* (the edge) dipped abruptly down, several hundred feet, till it reached a flat strip of grassy land; on either side a perpendicular precipice descended into the Gjendin Söen, and Bes Vand, respectively. To climbdown the *eggen*, or edge, was the only means of attaining this grassy plot, from whence one could ascend to the rocks on the opposite side. The shoulder of rock was just sufficiently broken and inclined to render a descent practicable, and, slinging our rifles behind our backs, we began to clamber down the *eggen*. A precipice yawned on either side of us and in front it was but little less abrupt, so that a slip of the foot or a loss of balance must inevitably have precipi-

tated us many hundred feet below. At last we stood on the narrow grassy isthmus, —

> "The landmark to the double tide,
> That purpling rolls on either side."

On the north side, and nearly at the same level, was stretched the calm expanse of Bes Vand; while on the north, a thousand feet below, the waters of Gjendin owned the stern boundary of rock. So narrow was the isthmus and so perpendicular the precipice of the Gjendin that, standing midway on the grassy plot between the two lakes, one could throw a stone into either.

Curiously enough there was not the trace of a channel through which the Bes Vand had at any time, however remote, poured its waters into the Gjendin,— the outlet of the lake being four or five miles distant in the opposite direction. Here we sat down to our frugal meal of bread, cheese, and butter carried in the oval wooden boxes made for the purpose.

After a short delay we scrambled on up the rocks beyond, and presently reached a ridge overlooking a large, sheltered, hollow. To the left lay a small tarn, while to the right the massive Beshö began to rear his giant form. Sitting down we scanned with eager eyes the ground before us, and presently caught sight of three reindeer upon a patch of grass between ourselves

and the tarn. Outstretched upon the rocks we peered over the ridge at the noble animals, considering how we could approach them. The ground, in one almost uniform sweep, fell towards them, and the direction of the wind rendered it necessary that we should cross the bare tract immediately before us, as the precipices of the Gjendin to our left, and the Beshö to our right, prevented all possibility of making any circuit.

For about an hour we waited in hopes of the deer shifting their quarters; but, finding them motionless, we resolved to run the risk of detection and stalk at once. Emptying our pockets of everything which could rattle, we began to worm ourselves down the bare rocks. A very rough crawl, we for the most part stretched out quite flat, brought us to a large rock, which proved to be the limit of our advance. Here I found the full benefit of the native plan of wearing gloves on such occasions. By this time it was past five o'clock, and the deer were all standing up feeding. Suddenly the sharp crack of the rifles broke the dead silence, and the deer trotted gently off, for a moment making us fear that both our shots had missed. But they had not run more than a hundred yards when one of them dropped gracefully on its knees and rolled over on its side.

A hoarse croak from among the crags of Beshö told us that we had not been the only witnesses of the reindeer's death, and presently a large raven was wheeling

over our heads screaming and croaking with intense delight. Without delay Peter's *tol-knive*, the short sheath-knife worn by the peasants of Norway, was at work, and the beautiful, thick, skin was quickly stripped from the deer. Seizing the animal by the legs I now drew it off the skin, remarking to Peter that it was a pity to allow it to be soiled by the blood. But this was contrary to the custom of reindeer-hunters and Peter replaced the deer upon the skin; and, when I insisted on its being otherwise, he exclaimed as he looked round him with an air of bewilderment, "Where then shall we lay the deer?" "Upon the ground," was the simple answer; but the possibility of so doing never seemed to have occurred to Peter, and it was with great reluctance that he acceded to my wishes.

The head cut off and the deer severed in two across the loins, our next care was to seek a place where the venison might be conveniently buried beneath the rocks and stones. Fortunately an *ure* close by favoured the work, and the venison was soon deposited in a hollow formed by removing the large stones. It was then carefully covered over with a large pile of heavy stones, till scarcely a vestige of it could be discovered, as we were sure that the wild animals would make an attempt to get at it.

The tongue was then taken from the head, and also the brains, at which Peter expressed great surprise,

adding that he would not eat brains for anything in the world. The skin was then tied in a roll to Peter's back, and the heart, tongue, &c., having been put into a pocket-handkerchief, for want of a better substitute, we started on the remaining part of our journey.

Before long we reached the brink of a precipitous cliff overlooking a deep valley, in the more open part of which, to our right, lay a long, narrow, lake, by whose western shores stood the little hut where we were to pass the night. The steep side of the valley descended, a rough walk of about half an hour along the dale brought us to the lake. Then keeping the water on our right hand, we skirted the shore and clambered along the precipitous sides of a lofty mountain, which, for some distance, left only a narrow practicable path between it and the lake. It was almost dark when we reached a small torrent, which, falling with a loud roar from the rocks above, hastened to mingle its ice-fed waters with those of the lake. Fording the stream we stood in another minute at the door of a small stone hut.

So ensconced was it among the rocks of the hill-side that it was only a near approach that could detect its existence. Opening the little wooden door, the only woodwork about the exterior, and bending almost double as we crossed the threshold, we found ourselves in the interior of a diminutive room. Its ap-

pearance was not suggestive of comfort, but for that we cared little so long as there was a roof above us. The bare ground composed the floor of the cabin, which might measure about eight feet square. In one corner was the usual angular fire-place of rough stone, and along the wall opposite to the door stood a bench of three planks, resting upon stone supports; and this supplied the place of table, chair, and bedstead. An iron pot, a wooden bowl, and two large wooden spoons completed the arrangement.

It was already nearly dark, and there was not a moment to lose in collecting a supply of fire-wood; so, depositing the rifles and knapsack in the hut, we hastened out again. But we were above the limit even of birch-trees, and juniper and a few *dwarf* birches were the only shrubs to be met with. And even these grew not in luxuriant bushes, but, as though to shelter themselves from the piercing blasts of winter, they crept humbly along the ground, concealing their writhing stems among the stones and mosses. It was no easy matter therefore to find the juniper in the dark, and it was some time before sufficient fuel to last throughout night had been collected.

It is most fortunate for the reindeer-hunter that juniper, the only wood on the mountains which burns when green, attains to a higher limit than any other shrub; simple as it may seem; however, it is re-

quisite to know the right way of laying it on the fire in order to make it burn. The spines of the juniper grow upwards from the branch, and, though it seems to be the natural way to lay it upon the fire with the spines downwards, that they may catch the flame, juniper thus placed will only smoulder; but when laid as it grows, with the spines upwards, it bursts forth into a blaze.

A good fire having been kindled by means of some matches from my oblong brass box, we bethought ourselves of cooking some reindeer-meat for supper. But a great obstacle lay in our way: the iron pot was coated both inside and out with a thick layer of rust — what was to be done? Peter was ready at once, and, filling the pot with water, he hung it over the fire, and then sat down, saying very calmly, "By to-morrow morning it will be fit to use."

But the Norwegian peasants have a proverb that "an Englishman must have meat every day;" nor was I, after our long walk, inclined to belie this our national failing, and so I suggested that the pot should be scoured out with sand.

"No," said Peter, "by to-morrow morning it will be quite clean: we will leave it over the fire."

"Come, Peter, we can but try; so bring the pot down to the lake, where possibly we may find some sand."

Peter was still very doubtful, but, after I had set

the example, he worked away in good earnest. Presently his countenance brightened up — to his surprise the rust was already yielding — and soon, with great delight, he showed me that it was clean.

It was quite astonishing how I now rose in Peter's estimation, and he seemed to look upon me as quite a superior being: in fact this exploit with the rusty pot was an era in my fjeld-life with Peter.

A few slices of reindeer's liver were soon frying in the pot, and we made an excellent supper of bread, butter, cheese, fried liver, and coffee. This concluded, we prepared for the night's rest, but the prospects of a comfortable sleep were very remote. A slight shower of rain, having fallen towards evening, had wetted the moss sufficiently to render it unavailable for the purposes of bedding.

Nothing remained but to take up our quarters upon the three planks, Peter taking one of these rested it on two stones, and lay down upon it with his feet against the hearth-stone. To me were left the other two planks, and, lying down on these, I covered myself with the fresh reindeer-skin. In about a couple of hours I was awoke by the cold, when I found that not only was the fire almost extinguished but that the deer-skin was quite wet — the animal having fallen down in a small stream of water. Peter was quickly roused, and by our united efforts the fire was once more

urged into a blaze; and I then exchanged resting-places with Peter, and lay down on the single plank by the fire — but not without great apprehensions of suddenly rolling off upon the floor.

But our rest was not undisturbed; for, as the fire grew low, the cold frosty air poured down the wide chimney and roused us from sleep. With what delight at last was hailed the mist of dawning day as it peered down the rude chimney; and with what eagerness was it watched as, gradually increasing in brightness, it dimmed the red glare of the blazing juniper!

A more liberal use of the fuel was now allowed, and faggot after faggot was heaped upon the primitive hearth; and, for the first time after the cold and tedious night, we began to feel a real glow of warmth diffuse itself throughout our chilly limbs.

CHAP. XII.

Scenery of Rus Vand. — Beshö. — Mountain-Shepherd. — Fishermen. — "God Betaling."—Shepherd's Hut.—A troublesome Flock.—Milking the Goats. — A valued Present. — Aurora Borealis. — Old Pitfalls.— Heste-kjœrn.—"Tak for Caffe."—Blaakjœrnhullet.—Fifteen Reindeer. A wide Leap.—Tracking the Deer.

DAY having fairly dawned we sallied out to collect a fresh supply of firewood wherewith to cook the breakfast. It was a lovely morning — the pure light of early dawn came streaming over the snow-clad peaks of Beshö, tinging the cool, silent, sky with a rosy gleam of gorgeous beauty.

I had now an opportunity of viewing the surrounding country, for the dusk of the evening had permitted but a feeble glimpse of the scenery. At a short distance from the little hut, Rus Vand spread its transparent waters, winding eastwards in long expanse till hidden by projecting masses of rock. Immediately before us, on the opposite side of the lake, which here might be about half a mile or rather more in width, the base of Beshö rose abruptly in a steep slope, and then, shooting upwards in a mighty, irregular, wall of

rock, towered to the height of 7605 English feet above the sea; its dark summit partly covered by a sprinkling of freshly-fallen snow, which sparkled brightly in the rays of the rising sun.



RUS VAND.

Behind the hut the rocks, sloping gradually upwards for a short distance, finally rose in huge, bold, masses; while to the right, or south, the valley was bounded by the steep cliffs which we had descended on the previous evening; a huge, conical, mountain, Gloptind, which dipped abruptly into the lake, formed a conspicuous object in the scenery. To the north the valley was more open, and the eye wandered far and wide over undulating moss-covered hills.

After breakfast, as our supply of food was almost exhausted, we determined to walk to the further end of the lake. Just where the Russen Elv flows out of the lake stood a wooden hut tenanted during the summer time by two fishermen, while at a short distance further was the hut of a mountain-shepherd. Strolling leisurely along, we skirted the shores of the lake, at intervals sitting down to pluck the *blaa-beer* (blueberries), a species much larger than the whortleberry, and with a most beautiful plum-like bloom. These *blaa-beer* I have never met with elsewhere. Once we caught sight of a couple of reindeer, wandering along the steep slope, on the opposite side of the lake, and making towards the end which we had just quitted.

Late in the afternoon we began to approach the hut of the fishermen, and by good luck descried the shepherd, at a little distance, returning from the fjelds with his flock of sheep and goats. Walking in front of the flock, he called to them in a peculiar, shrill, scream, and it was interesting to see how well the creatures followed him, hastening on after their master as he called to them. The Norwegian shepherd uses no dog, but gains the friendship of his flock by occasionally treating them to a handful of salt, a supply of which he always keeps in his pocket; and so well do they know his voice that they immediately gather round him when he calls to them.

Attracted by our shouts, the shepherd approached towards us. He was a fine, tall, man, but by no means handsome in features: clad in a coat of sheep-skin with the wool outside, and with a fur cap on his head, he presented a very wild appearance. After the customary salutations he inquired what we were doing, and was, of course, very anxious to learn who and what I was. This having been told him, his attention was absorbed by some peculiarities of my dress. My boots and leather gaiters were the objects of minute scrutiny, and he commented upon the make of them and also the stitching. He entered with much goodwill into our plans, and consented, provided we should undertake the care of his flock during his absence, to proceed to the Ruslien sœters, distant about eight miles, and return on the following morning with a supply of provisions.

After a short delay we continued towards the fishermen's hut, leaving the shepherd to follow with his flock. The small wooden cottage and boat-house stood on the very shores of the lake, close to where the Russen Elv rushes out in a foaming torrent. One of the fishermen, a tall young man, with a frank, open, countenance, and very merry and talkative, was engaged in repairing the chimney by building it up with turf and stones. The other was a short elderly man and rather pompous and consequential in manner. Both were dressed in their Sunday clothes—blue tail-coat

with bright brass buttons, and with their best red night-caps on their heads.

Nothing could be more obliging than their kind assurance that they would do all in their power to assist us; that they would on the morrow convey our provisions to the stone hut in their boat, and bring the venison by water to their cottage and thence forward it to the Ruslien sœters on one of their ponies. The promise of *god Betaling* (good pay)—in Norway simply meaning that a reasonable remuneration will be given without grudging—had no doubt its effects in influencing the fishermen in our favour; but there is something striking in the pleasant feeling which pervades an agreement with the Norsk peasants, even where money is concerned. Apparently unactuated by their own interests they undertake a work or commission simply to do their employer a favour; and accept his dollars, not as though he were paying them for their time and trouble, but as if he were discharging an obligation under which he had placed himself.

Before proceeding to the shepherd's hut, where we were to pass the night, we purchased a fine trout, which, though it had only been caught a few hours, was already packed in the salting-tub. Catching fish in nets and salting them for winter use formed the occupation of these two men during the summer months; but, besides providing themselves with food, they doubt-

less gained some trifling sum by the sale of a part of the fish. In Norway the right of fishing, in however remote a stream or lake, is private property; whereas the right of shooting is free to every one, whether native or foreigner, throughout the whole country; and no game licence is required.

Departing with our trout we followed a rough track by the side of the Russen Elv. Parallel with the course of the river ran a long ridge rounded at the top, and having much the appearance of a *lateral moraine*, or ridge of *débris* flanking a glacier. Upon this stood the shepherd's hut: and, so bare and trampled by the sheep and goats was the ground immediately around it, that it looked like a temporary building reared up on a sandy desert. But further from the hut there was an abundance of grass, and numerous birch-trees studded the rocks — a joyful sight, auguring a warm fire to dispel the cold during the night. Close by was a cave in the rocks where Peter told me he had once lived for a week with three other men on a reindeer-hunting expedition.

A fire was now lit and the coffee-pot put on to boil, and, after some refreshment, the shepherd began to smarten himself for an appearance at the sœters. The sheep-skin garment was exchanged for a neat tail-coat of blue cloth, one pair of tidy stockings replaced the two pair which he had been wearing, and a pair of neat shoes were substituted for the well-worn ones in which he

roamed the fjelds. Thus prepared to present himself at the Ruslien sœters, with a large knapsack strapped on his back, he gave us the parting instructions respecting the flock. Three nanny-goats, he said, were accustomed to share the shelter of the hut with him: each of them had a sleeping-place by the wall, to which we were to tie them by passing the withes, hanging from the wall, round their necks.

Then bidding us *farvel* he started for the sœters, promising to return next morning betimes with the provisions and Shot, who, now that we had a supply of venison within reach, could be received at our hut.

The tending of the sheep and goats was no sinecure; for, after sitting comfortably by the fire for a short time, we found that the whole flock had disappeared. Away we went in pursuit of them, and at last, with much difficulty, succeeded in driving them back to near the hut. In hopes of keeping the restless animals quiet, I procured some salt from the shepherd's bag, and went out to the flock, when I was immediately surrounded and perfectly mobbed by numerous importunate sheep and goats; which, jumping up upon me, struck such violent blows with their hard little feet that I quickly got rid of the salt, and beat a rapid retreat to the hut. We had no peace with the flock till night drew on, and gladly then we listened to the gradual dying away of the tinkling of bells and bleat-

ing of sheep, announcing to us a cessation of our troubles.

After a time first one and then another nanny-goat appeared at the door of the hut—the third never arrived — but not seeing their master they peered in with doubtful looks, and wistfully eyed the strangers. The salt-bag was immediately resorted to, and, by degrees, one of the nanny-goats was enticed across the threshold, when the door was shut and the goat secured and tied by the neck to the wall. The same stratagem was successfully performed with the second goat, and Peter, being learned in the language addressed to goats, was deputed to undertake the milking. The milk was most excellent; and goats' milk is far richer than cows', but if heated it acquires a most disagreeable flavour, unfitting it for mixing with tea or coffee.

During the evening Peter amused himself with trying to open my brass match-box: it opened with a puzzle of two dials, the hands of which required to be set to particular figures. Peter entertained an intense admiration of this box, and, after looking at it for a long time, at last said, "Vil de selge mi?" (Will you sell it to me?)

"No," I replied "I will *give* it to you." He was transported with delight, and exclaimed, as he shook me warmly by the hand, "Mange, mange Tak! jeg skal bring de til stor Bok." (Many, many thanks! I

shall bring you to big buck). Scarcely a soul did Peter converse with afterwards to whom he did not proudly show this wonderful puzzle-box, and unbounded was his delight at finding no one ingenious enough to discover the trick. It was quite pleasant to see the delight caused by the giving away of this small trifle.

But preparations for the night's rest were now our consideration. Stretching across the room and dividing it, as it were, into two portions, stood a large platform four or five feet wide and raised a few feet from the ground; in one corner of it was the shepherd's bed of sheep-skins, and in another were strewed the culinary utensils, the salt and meal-bags and various other articles; beneath was stowed away a large supply of fire-wood. Upon the fore part of the platform there was ample room, and on this we strewed a little moss to render the bedless hard.

After a few hours I was roused by the cold, and throwing some large logs upon the hearth I made up a good fire. But "there is no rose without its thorn" — and dense clouds of smoke filling the room rendered it quite insupportable. Opening the door I stepped out to relieve my smarting eyes. The night was clear and frosty, the dark blue sky was bespangled with stars; and in the northern heavens glowed a brilliant light, extending far and wide in a fan-like shape, and shooting out fiery coruscations, which, spreading over the whole

of the northern sky, and reaching even to the zenith, flickered as the transparent flame of an intenselv heated furnace.

A glorious scene it was! and long and intently could one have gazed upon it. But the keen frost soon drove me back, unwillingly indeed, to the warmer precincts of the hut; and I once more betook myself to my nocturnal retreat upon the hard boards, though not without feelings of gratitude towards the smoke for having been the cause of my witnessing this beautiful aurora borealis. Clambering up upon the platform, I was just going to lie down, when suddenly, with a loud crash, the planks gave way, and with great difficulty I saved myself from sharing in the general *avalanche*. Fortunately it was not repeated, and the remainder of the night was comfortably passed without further adventure.

The shepherd returning betimes next morning with the provisions, we at once started on our way back to the hut; taking the knapsack and Shot as far as the fisher's hut for the fishermen to bring up in their boat later in the day. Crossing in the boat to the opposite side of the lake, we continued along by the water-side, in hopes of falling in with the two reindeer which we had seen on the previous day. Towards mid-day we sat down to a second breakfast near a dilapidated wooden building which served sometimes as an ambush



T. M. Wyndham, del.

Reinhart, Chromolith.

RAUHAMMER.

from whence to shoot reindeer, and, if I am not mistaken, it had been originally constructed for that purpose.

Near the end of the lake, where the precipitous rocks of Beshö left but a narrow passage, we passed some old pitfalls, which, two or three hundred years ago, before gunpowder came into general use, served for catching reindeer. As might be expected from their age, there was but little to be seen but the remains of the walls on either side by which the unwitting deer were guided to their destination.

We now climbed the heights on the western side of the valley, whence we overlooked a wide extent of ground, and obtained also a magnificent view of the mountains, on the opposite side of the Gjendin, over which we had rambled during our stay at Joh's wooden hut. Immediately above us the grand peaks and glaciers of Rauhammer rose in massive grandeur. Before us, in the hollow of the rocks, lay a small tarn, Hestekjœrn (horse-tarn), on whose frozen waters Peter had often seen vast herds of reindeer congregated, at one time above two hundred; but he had not been able to approach within range. But now not a deer could be seen, and turning towards the mountain of Rauhammer we climbed up to a ridge overlooking a deep valley watered by the streams from the glaciers. On the grassy flats by the side of the *bœk* (beck, a stream, Yorkshire) we expected to find reindeer. The glacier

immediately facing us descended in a very precipitous slope from almost the highest parts of the mountain, and its surface seemed much broken by *crevasses*. Concealed behind the moraines of this glacier Peter had more than once shot reindeer. Descending from the heights, as no reindeer could be seen, we followed the course of the stream till we reached the point where the foaming waters dashed boldly down in a roaring cascade, and whence we could survey the long expanse of Rus Vand.

From among the rocks below a faint blue smoke was curling upwards, and losing itself in the pure mountain air,—it proceeded from our little hut, and showed us that the fishermen had already arrived. We found them comfortably seated before a blazing fire of juniper, over which the pot was presently suspended, and we prepared to exercise the small amount of hospitality in our power, by treating our guests to a cup of coffee, or rather, for we had no cups, to a turn at the wooden spoon by which the beverage was supped from the iron pot; the fishermen, as they concluded, saying, "Tak for caffe." Just now the delights of a smoky chimney were experienced to the fullest extent; and at one time I absolutely could not see the face of one of the fishermen, who stood but a few feet from me.

When they departed we immediately set to work,

Peter to collect firewood for the night's supply, and I to repair the chimney. After some little trouble we had the satisfaction to see my efforts crowned with success, and the smoke persuaded to make use of the means of exit prepared for it. Nor were our sleeping arrangements neglected; and a quantity of a small heathy moss with innumerable black shining berries (the crowberry, *Empetrum nigrum*), which grew in great quantities round the base of large stones and rocks, was collected and strewn upon the floor, affording a most comfortable and warm couch.

A glorious morning!—and we were out early on an expedition in search of reindeer. Not a cloud softened the deep transparency of the azure sky, and the snow-clad summit of Beshö glittered in the clear rays of the newly-risen sun; silence reigned around, save where the rippling waters of the lake murmured as they washed the rocky beach, or the echo of the foaming cascade, wafted upon the cool, refreshing, breeze, faintly reached the ear.

Skirting the shores of the lake for about a couple of miles we climbed the steep grassy slope of the western valley-side. A long ascent brought us to a wide expanse of rocky, undulating ground, to the left of which glittered the Tyknings and Blaa Bræen, while before us the wide Veo Bræen lay spread in a dazzling field of ice. It was soon after reaching Blaakjœrn-hullet (blue-

tarn-hollow), as this locality is named, that we discovered a herd of fifteen deer browsing upon a barren slope directly opposite to us. Our position was most exposed — the ground was quite unbroken — and sinking slowly and carefully to the ground, we lay at full length in momentary dread of being detected.

Our hopes were that they would feed back over the brow beyond them, and we watched their movements with great anxiety. But we were disappointed — first one deer and then another lay down upon the slope facing us, and we found ourselves quite entrapped, able neither to move forward nor to retreat without great fear of detection. Thus we lay for a long time, but at last it became too painful to remain perfectly motionless, and we determined to crawl backwards that we might be partially hidden at least by a slight fall of the ground. Fortunately the manœuvre was successfully accomplished, and for two or three hours we lay quietly upon the rocks, watching the deer and beguiling the time by eating our scanty luncheon of bread and cheese.

At last, however, our patience was exhausted, and, as the wind was favourable, we determined to attempt a stalk. Crawling along over wet ground and sharp rocks, we finally reached a ridge of rock about three hundred yards from the nearest reindeer. We had now, as we thought, gained a place of security, and, after assuring ourselves that the deer were undisturbed, remained

quietly hidden behind the intervening ridge, waiting patiently till they should rise up to feed, or shift their quarters to a more favourable spot.

The wind blew directly in our faces, and all seemed hopeful, when suddenly we felt a cool breeze against the back of our heads, and, whispering our fears to one another, we cautiously peered over the ridge, and, to our dismay, saw the whole herd making off at a rapid gallop over endless *ures*, to walk slowly over which is as much as a man can do. Away — away they flew, headed by a noble buck; and faster and faster they sped as our bullets whizzed ineffectually after them. At one time one of the deer lagged behind, but in another instant it was straining itself to the utmost, and stretching out its legs in wide bounds, as it redoubled its speed to overtake the others. A wide torrent was taken by the whole herd in a bound, and, in a few minutes, they were lost in the distance.

We proceeded as far as the foot of the Veo Bræen, but, not meeting with any more deer, we returned to the torrent which the herd had leapt, in order to ascertain the direction they had taken, Peter averring that they had followed the course of the stream, in which case we might yet find them by the shores of the Rus Vand; while my impression was that they had continued straight on to the mountains before them.

Leaving Peter to track down the side of the *bœk*, I

leaped from rock to rock at the imminent risk of falling into the torrent, till, finally, I gained the opposite bank; and then proceeded to the spot where last I fancied to have seen the deer. In one place, after very close examination, I discovered that the reindeer-moss was slightly pressed down, and by gradually tracing back such faint marks I was brought to the torrent, where some earth recently turned up showed it to be the place where the deer had alighted from their leap, and this left no doubt as to the faint tracks beyond being those of the reindeer.

Not a doubt now remained but that they had galloped off for the valleys beyond the opposite mountains, and, consequently, all hopes of again falling in with them were at once dispelled.

Again, then, we returned empty-handed to our little stone hut, where we consoled ourselves with a frugal supper of bread and cheese.

CHAP. XIII.

Short of Food.—A Snow Storm.—Habits of the Glutton.—Laden with the Deer.—Hunter's Beverage.— Old Norse Language.—Intelligence of the Natives. — Threatening Weather. — Its Effect on Reindeer. — Leave the Stone Hut.

THE beautiful sky of the previous day was now exchanged for one of threatening aspect, and, after waiting for a few hours in the vain hopes of the weather clearing up, we started for the fjelds where our venison lay concealed. The wet weather, though by no means acceptable, was far from inopportune, for our supply of meat, with the exception of a small piece of bacon reserved for Shot's use, had been exhausted for a whole day, and scarcely any bread remained; so that had we returned once more unsuccessful from a reindeer-hunt we should have gone supperless to bed.

Norway is certainly not a country where one revels in plenty, and still less so when one lives on the fjelds, above the regions inhabited by willow-grouse. Peter and an Englishman, whom he accompanied as guide, were once, during the winter time, for two whole days

without any food at all. Fortunately they at last succeeded in shooting a reindeer, when, so famishing was the Englishman, that he drank of the blood of the freshly-killed deer.

On reaching the end of the lake we climbed the eastern valley-side, and here the snow, falling fast and thick, beat hard against our faces. Shortly before arriving at the hollow where the deer lay buried we came upon the fresh slot of reindeer, which we followed as far as the top of the opposite ridge; but the snow now began to fall so thickly as to render all chance of seeing the reindeer quite hopeless, and we returned without delay to our *câche*.

Though in one place the meat had been slightly nibbled, the pile of stones had effectually prevented the ravages of wild beasts. The whole of the refuse had entirely disappeared, and the head had been well picked of all meat. On seeing this I asked Peter if any gluttons had been at the place. "No," said he, "the white foxes have done this; if a glutton had been here it would have carried the head away to its den." Such seems to be the habit of the glutton, for Peter mentioned that, having once killed a reindeer near the Rus Vand, in the winter time, and left it lying on the snow, on returning from the hut whither he had gone to fetch his pony, he found that, in the space of three hours, the gluttons had nearly carried away the whole

reindeer piece by piece. The glutton is very partial to the horns of the reindeer, and, whether it be due to this circumstance or not, certain it is that the shed antlers of reindeer are scarcely ever met with.* It is said to kill reindeer, by fixing itself to the poor animal's neck, when no expedient to which the deer can resort is able to shake off the savage brute.

No sooner did we commence moving the stones from off the venison than a hoarse croak from the heights of Beshö announced that our old friend the raven was not unobservant of our actions, and soon it was again wheeling over our heads, no doubt expecting a further share of the spoil. The venison, when disinterred, was packed knapsack-fashion on our backs by means of strong cords, Peter bearing the fore and I the hind quarters; and thus we started on our homeward march.

The reindeer being if anything larger than the red-deer of Scotland, and certainly a much heavier-boned animal, it may well be imagined that we carried no trifling weight. Mr. Lloyd in his "Scandinavian Adventures" remarks that the reindeer sometimes attains the weight of 360 lbs., very nearly 26 stone, of 14lbs. to the stone. It was certainly a great surprise to me that we should

* Mr. Lamont, in "Seasons with the Sea-horses," says that numbers of shed horns strew the plains of Spitzbergen; he estimates the weight of reindeer at over 300 lbs.

have been able to carry the whole of the venison between us, and on starting from the hut my notions as to how it would be effected were extremely vague. While the horns of the doe reindeer are small, those of a fine buck are quite magnificent; the measurement of a pair in my possession—39 inches across from horn to horn, and 42 inches in length—will give some idea of their size. Of the two short, palmated, antlers between the eyes, the one on the left side is, in all horns that I have seen, much wider and more fully developed than that on the right side, but for this I have heard no reason assigned.

The snow now driving against our backs in some degree compensated for our heavy loads, which necessitated extreme caution over the broken rocks, as the slightest stumble would occasion a serious fall. At last, after deviating from the proper direction on account of the denseness of the snow storm, we reached the brink of the valley-side. Just here several reindeer had descended during the early part of the day, and our hopes of success on the following day were much raised.

Two hours and a half brought us back to the hut, and, after blunting our appetites with a few slices of venison, we set to work in real earnest to collect the firewood for the night's use. Soon we sat down to a real substantial dinner of venison roasted in the pot.

On the table, or plank rather, was placed the wooden bowl filled with water with which was mixed scraped *mys-ost*, a yellow goat's cheese; this forms the usual beverage of the reindeer-hunter when nothing better can be obtained, and under the circumstances it was certainly preferable to plain water.

Neither here could the venison be safely left unprotected, and making another *câche* we again piled it over carefully with rocks and large stones.

In Peter, during the evenings, I found an excellent companion; and we were now able, between English and Norse, to understand each other with tolerable facility. Old Norse was Peter's native language, and, many of the words being exactly the same as English, (e. g. *timber*, *potatoes*, &c.) where the Danish bears but little or no resemblance, it served frequently as an additional explanatory language.

No doubt a native of Yorkshire, Westmoreland, or Cumberland, would be able to understand much of the Old Norse without difficulty; for it was in those parts of England that the Northmen seem chiefly to have settled, as is evident from the frequent occurrence of Scandinavian names and terminations of places: e. g. —*by* (a town), Whitby (*Hvid-by*, white town); —*thorpe* (a village), Copmansthorpe (*Kjöbmand-thorpe*, merchants' village); — dale (*dal*), Wensleydale; —*thwaite* (*tved*, an isolated piece of ground), Bracken-

thwaite; and also from the general use of the words *fell*, and *tarn*, which are undoubtedly of Scandinavian origin.

But possibly the Old Norse would be better understood by the dweller in Caithness, or the Orkneys, the inhabitants of which may be said to be almost pure Norwegian; or the native of the Isle of Man, which did not pass from under the Norwegian dominion till 1266, and still retains its Scandinavian constitution, having its Thing-hill (*thing*, a judicial assembly), Tynwald Hill, from which its laws are proclaimed; indeed, whether in Iceland, Norway, the Orkneys or Shetlands, it is the only *Thing*-hill or *Thingvalla*, still in use.

Politics were a favourite subject of conversation with Peter, and the late war between France and Austria was, of course, the engrossing topic. The enlightenment of the minds of the Norwegian peasants is frequently very astonishing — there is not an individual who cannot read and almost all can write — and they often strike one as being far above their position in life with respect to their information and intellectual attainments.

One evening Peter said to me, "What sort of a man is 'Yōn Breet'" (spelled according to pronunciation). "Who is he? an Englishman?" I inquired. "Yes, an Englishman, who speaks at public meetings in large towns." This at once explained that *Yōn Breet* was no other than John Bright; but it seemed strange that a

labouring man, in a country where the means of communication can neither be said to be rapid or frequent, should be so much acquainted with a foreign land as to be interested in individuals; and I question much whether the same information would be found amongst the agricultural population of England.

But Peter seemed to have quite a fancy for England, and indulged in the dream of coming over to see the country; and with this view would ask me multitudes of questions about the journey, the expense of it, and the mode of living in England.

"What sort of steamers are they which cross from Norway to England?" he inquired.

"Oh! very good ones."

"But do they give one good food on board?"

"Yes, certainly; you fare almost as well as you do on land."

On this point, however, Peter seemed to have his misgivings, and after a pause, remarked,—

"That may be true; but I should certainly take my bread and cheese with me."

He expressed great surprise on learning that people did not carry bread and cheese about with them in England, as both might be procured at intervals of every three or four miles.

Peter was indeed a very excellent fellow, and I look back with pleasure to the days spent in his society.

Next morning, climbing the rocky slope behind the hut, we sought the recesses of the valley above in quest of reindeer, but, finding them untenanted, ascended to the higher ground to our left or south. The summits of the mountains on the opposite side of the Gjendin were hidden by dark, lowering, clouds; and the whole of the south-western heavens wore a most threatening and almost terrific appearance, foreboding heavy storms and fresh falls of snow. There was something melancholy in gazing at those giant mountains, now bidding defiance, as it were, by their awe-striking aspect to the approach of man—those very mountains which, but a few days previously, as they shot darkly upwards into the clear transparency of a cloudless sky, had caused unbounded feelings of delight and admiration. The whole extent of fjeld over which we had wandered on the day that we had been so unlucky with reindeer at two different times was now thickly covered with snow.

Our wanderings were once more fruitless, and Peter seemed much perplexed at our not finding deer, which he said was quite unusual on these mountains; but he said that probably the weather had caused them to move off towards the south, whence the wind was now blowing, to other parts of the mountains, whither if we could have spared the time we should also have proceeded. There was no hope, and we turned our

faces towards home, and scrambling down to the valley, sometimes sliding quickly down steep slopes of snow we followed it till we reached the Rus Vand, and, skirting the shores, once more arrived at our stone hut.

It was now past noon and some venison was quickly put into the pot to cook. But little time now remained to me in Norway, and, uncertain on what day the steamer left Christiania for England, I determined to reach the capital before the middle of the coming week. It was already Thursday, and we found that it would be necessary to quit the fjelds the same afternoon; so, packing up the knapsack and setting the hut in order, we started for the fishermen's cottage, taking Blaakjœrnhullet, as a last resource, on our way. But no deer could be seen, and, leaving the heights, we made straight for the end of the lake.

The fishermen were already preparing their supper of gröd when we arrived, and this also formed our evening meal, but *gröd* and sour skimmed milk is indeed an unpalatable food. Wooden benches insufferably hard and rough composed our couches, a cow's skin my covering, and a bag, filled so full of meal that it might as well have been a stone, my pillow.

CHAP. XIV.

Reindeer-Moss for Cows.—Depart from the Fjelds.—Cheese-making at Ruslien Sœter.—Shoe-mending.—Routine of a Sœter.—Inferiority of the Cheese.—Cutting one's Name.—Grievance of Shepherd.—The Randsvœrk Sœters.—Hospitality.—Looking for a Pony.—Game Laws and Premiums.—Inquiring Peasants.—Old Furniture.—Prepare for Departure.—Farewell to Peter.

HAPPILY the grödd and sour milk of the previous evening was not repeated, and a couple of fine trout constituted an excellent breakfast. Having satisfactorily agreed with the fishermen that they should bring the venison from the hut in their boat the same day, and forward it early next morning to the Ruslien sœters, we next inquired about the means of furthering my baggage from Ruslien to Björlstad. Fortunately there happened to be a man and a boy staying at the shepherd's hut, who had come up forty miles from Vaage with ponies, to fetch a supply of reindeer-moss to serve as provender for cattle during the winter, and with this man we bargained for the use of one of his ponies. Soon after, the shepherd appeared on his way up to the fjelds with his flock, and very kindly gave us

permission to take a drink of goat's milk as we passed his hut.

Bidding *farvel* to the shepherd and fisherman, with many wishes of "*lykkelig paa Reise*" we set off on our journey to the sœters of Ruslien. Following the course of the river, over whose channelled bed of rock the waters impetuously rushed from the Rus Vand, our rugged path wound slowly downwards till gradually the fjelds gave place to luxuriant birch-grown slopes. Beyond this again it threaded through dark forests of Scotch fir, which, here shooting gracefully up from among the mossy rocks, waved their sombre plumes to the mountain breeze; there lay majestic trunks uprooted by the vehemence of the wintry blast; while on yonder knoll stood the withered skeleton of a barkless tree, once luxuriant as the tall forms which grew around, and, though killed by the biting frosts, it still remained to testify of its bygone might, and to bid defiance to the sweeping winds.

At length the Ruslien sœters came in sight, and we turned towards the same sœter which had sheltered us on our journey up to the mountains. Friday being butter and cheese-making day, Jacob was very busy at work. An immense iron cauldron suspended over the fire contained the sour skim-milk, which by boiling becomes converted into the *only* cheese made from cows' milk, called *Gammel Ost*. In a smaller cauldron bubbled a

quantity of goats' milk, of which two sorts of cheeses are made. The first of these is called *Hvid Ost*, white cheese, and is made in small flat cheeses; it is quite white, as the name denotes, and full of holes, but the taste is insipid and rather "goaty." After the *Hvid Ost* has been skimmed out, the yellow liquor which remains is boiled down to consistency, and is then cast in wooden moulds shaped like a brick. This is called *Mys-Ost* (the *zieger* of Swiss châlets) —a very peculiar tasting cheese, but, in my opinion, better than the *Hvid Ost*. The *gammel ost*, however, to my taste is the worst cheese of all, though not in the opinion of a native, who likes nothing better.

The old woman was still employed, as on our former visit, in boiling juniper branches—in fact she looked as though she had been going by clock-work ever since; while the little girl found an arduous occupation in scrubbing the shallow wooden milk-vessels, just emptied of their contents, and washing them out with juniper-tea from the enormous vat.

Jacob warmly welcomed us back to his sœter, and immediately set before us a bowl of delicious milk. At about two o'clock we dined off *gröd* made with cream, which, though rather too rich, was by no means to be despised. Cleaning guns and arranging baggage afforded me ample employment for the remainder of the afternoon; while Peter, taking the axe, cut out a

last whereon to mend his shoes, which were literally falling from his feet.

After our evening meal we retired to rest, Peter and Jacob, upon the beds, which I declined, preferring to lie at full length upon a bench than to be cramped up in a short bed. During the night I was roused by water dripping upon my face, and on listening heard the rain falling in torrents; the fire was still burning and gave sufficient light to search for a dry place upon the floor, which was a difficult thing to find as the rain entered everywhere through the roof. It is strange that, considering the trouble and pains the Norsk peasants take in building their houses, they should not turn their attention a little more to the construction of the roof.

The rain was still falling in torrents when we rose next morning, and, though we regretted our absence from the magnificent mountains, we had cause for congratulation at not having passed the night at the little stone hut, which would certainly have admitted the rain to a greater extent than even the sœter did. Hour after hour passed away and still the fishermen did not appear; which, as I had hoped to have reached the high road on the same day, and thus avoided travelling on the next day, Sunday, was very disappointing.

The time, from the roving life which we had been

leading, seemed doubly long; and our only amusement was to turn the large barrel-churn, and stir the boiling milk in the cauldrons. However, it was interesting to have an opportunity of watching the dairy-operations, and to notice their defects and advantages, the former of which, I fear, are the most numerous.

The cows are milked morning and evening, and the milk, having been poured into the flat wooden vessels, or *kolle*, is allowed to stand for a whole week, when it becomes covered with a thick layer of *römme*, or sour cream. This, on cheese-making days, is skimmed off and thrown into the churn; while the residue of sour milk is poured into the iron cauldrons to boil. The butter, as soon as it is made, is salted, and then stowed away in tall wooden vessels. About once a week ponies are sent up from the valleys to bring down the produce of the sœter.

The consequence of thus making butter and cheese of sour cream and milk is that neither is good; and hence there cannot be a large export from the country. But if good cheeses were made — and the quality of the milk quite allows of this being done — a large proportion might be sold for exportation, when they would doubtless fetch a higher price than they do at present, and one of the resources of the country would be opened up. In Swiss *châlets* the milk is only allowed to stand for twelve hours before it is made into cheese; and the

result is that good cheeses are produced, which have a great sale in other countries. Sometimes one is told, as a great wonder, of a budeier who can make *Sveitserost*, or Swiss cheese, so that perhaps a move in the right direction is being made.

The middle of September was now fast approaching, and in about another week the sœters would all be deserted. About the commencement of June the cows are first taken up to the sœters, when they are frequently so feeble, from the long confinement and bad food, that they can scarcely walk. But as soon as they reach the mountains they are quickly restored to strength by the pasture of the fjelds; in the middle of September they come down to the valleys to feed on the grass, and there remain till the ground is covered with snow, when they once more make a pilgrimage to the sœters, whence they do not return till all the hay, which was made during the summer in the enclosure before the sœter, has been consumed; and then at last they go down to the valleys to be incarcerated till spring returning melts the deep snow. The Norwegian cow is a small animal and generally of a dun colour, prettily marked with black; and to stand the severity of the winter season must doubtless be very hardy.

After a dinner of *Römme-kolle* I employed myself, in compliance with the earnest requests both of Peter and

Jacob, in cutting my name upon the large deal table of the sœter; and received their best thanks when it was accomplished. It is now probably pointed out to every person who enters the sœter, and made the occasion of all my sayings and doings being narrated; and should any fellow-countryman happen to go to this sœter it will doubtless be observed to him: "Of course you know Wyndham? he is an Englishman." The very fact of belonging to the same country being sufficient reason, in the eyes of the Norsk peasantry, for acquaintance.

Late in the afternoon a joyful sound was heard—the shepherd was coming with his whole flock of sheep and goats. At last there were hopes of a release from the sœter!

The shepherd on entering the sœter commenced an animated conversation, but from his doleful tone of voice he was evidently unhappy about something. Soon I learned that his last night's rest was the grievance—that the rain had literally poured through the roof in torrents, drenching the poor man to the skin; in fact he was completely disgusted with a shepherd's life.

"Enough!" he said; "this is the first time that I have undertaken the office of shepherd, and so shall it be the last; and I vow that I will never return to the hut as long as I live."

From the shepherd we learned that the fishermen had been detained by the weather, for so thick were the mists, that they had met with great difficulty in finding the ponies; "however," he added, "they are now on their way, and will soon be here." Soon Olaf, the tall fisherman, arrived, and with him the man who was to take charge of the baggage as far as Randsvœrk sœters. Paying him a dollar for the trouble, we packed up the baggage, and, bidding farewell to Jacob, shouldered our rifles and set out on our long walk, leaving the man and pony to follow.

At one time threading through the thick fir woods, at another emerging upon grassy flats, the track led by the banks of the well-known Sjo Elv. As night drew on, the moon rose clear and bright over the eastern hills, feebly penetrating with her pale rays the dark woods of sombre fir, and throwing a faint light upon our rocky path. Shot was now kept close to our heels, as Peter remarked that it was just possible for a wolf to dash out upon him; when, if unprotected, he would meet with an untimely death. At about ten o'clock, after a very difficult walk of four hours, we quitted the gloomy woods and entered upon a wide expanse of grass-land. At the further end, upon a gentle slope, stood innumerable wooden buildings, presenting quite the appearance of a village.

These were the Randsvœrk sœters; and, raising the

latch of one of them, we entered a large, clean, room. The smouldering embers upon the hearth, throwing a faint and flickering light around, discovered to us a couple of beds, upon one of which reposed the budeier of the sœter, who, on hearing voices in the room, inquired who we were, and the cause of our arrival. On Peter informing her, she immediately rose from the bed — the inhabitants of sœters, always sleeping in their clothes, are prepared for any emergency — and with perfect good-humour consented to give us shelter for the night.

She was a stout, bustling, housewife, the very essence of good-nature; and indeed our unceremonious entry was enough to put it to the test. Nothing can be more pleasing than the ready reception, proceeding from sheer kindness, which is granted to the wayfarer in Norway: —

> "And stranger is a holy name;
> Guidance and rest, and food and fire,
> In vain he never must require."

A bowl of milk was our supper; and we next procured a quantity of hay from an outhouse, and, strewing it upon the floor, we lay down to sleep before the fire.

Next morning, after removing the hay, we sat down to an excellent breakfast of coffee and *kage-bröd*, a delicacy which we had not tasted for many a day.

This was the neatest sæter I saw in Norway. The fire-place, an immense edifice of massive stone, was very handsome; and the whole interior arrangements were of a very superior order. The cooking utensils were remarkable from the excellence of their quality and their extreme cleanliness, the copper kettles shining like burnished gold.

Twelve skillings (6*d.*) was the very small trifle demanded by the budeier for all that we had had; and leaving the sæter we passed on to another one, where we hoped to meet with a pony. In this sæter the management was very different; the room, intensely hot and close, was crowded with a motley group of men, women, and children, each more revolting in appearance than another. We were almost glad to be disappointed in our expectations of finding a pony here, for we were thus released from the sæter at once, and hurrying on we pushed up the hill to the one where we had now been directed. There was no time to lose, for it was Sunday, and the people were rapidly quitting the sæters, some on foot, others on horseback, and we almost feared that all the ponies would be gone before we could engage one. However, we were at last successful, and, giving the peasant directions to come on to Bjölstad as soon as the baggage should arrive from the Ruslien sæters, we started on the remainder of our journey.

Leaving the Randsvœrk sœters, we threaded our way through dense fir forests. Some of the trees having been lately cut and sawn up gave us the opportunity of examining the timber. Though the trees were small, the wood seemed to be far superior to that of any Scotch firs of English growth. We passed a few old pitfalls for elk; but these noble animals have now disappeared from these forests, and are to be found only in Österdalen, a district some miles to the north-east. The law with respect to elk is very stringent, allowing only one to be killed on each person's property, and that only by the proprietor himself. Red-deer are also found in Norway: I heard of them in the Hardanger district, but they are said to be most abundant in the large island of Hitteröen, almost opposite to Trondhjem. The law respecting red-deer is much the same as with the elk, excepting that *two* are permitted to be killed instead of one. Reindeer, on the other hand, may be shot in any number between the 1st of August and the 1st of April. But I fear that neither with respect to birds or beasts is the law much attended to.

For the encouragement of the destruction of noxious animals the Government gives a reward, which is fixed for each kind of animal. For a bear, wolf, glutton, lynx, or wild cat, the premium is three dollars, equal to about 13*s.* 6*d*; for eagles, owls, and hawks the

rewards range from 1*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* The skins of the beasts or birds must be taken to the *Foged* (magistrate) of the district, who marks them and gives the bearer an order for obtaining the money.

Among the trees were numerous small birds; in fact I saw more here than in any other part of Norway. On emerging from the forest we perceived that we had already reached the regions of civilization, for cultivated patches of land were here and there visible, and a few cottages showed that these were permanently inhabited parts of the country. Into one of these cottages, where Peter had some friends, we entered, and found the inmates eating their morning meal of salt fish and potatoes. Here again we experienced the hospitality of the Norwegians, for a bowl of beer and a plate of the ridge-and-furrow Sunday cakes were immediately set before us.

The cottagers, two middle-aged women and a poor dwarf young man—the only deformed person that I saw in Norway—were very anxious, as usual, to know all particulars about me, who I was, what I was doing, how long I had been in Norway, &c. Now that my acquaintance with the language was sufficient to enable me to understand most of what was said, it was amusing to hear the account that Peter constantly gave of me. One accomplishment after another was detailed, and in fact my "character" was given most minutely.

After informing the people what my name was and to what country I belonged, Peter would thus address the wondering audience: "The Englishman can talk a little Norse, and he can cook meat, potatoes, and coffee"—*ja so!* ejaculated the by-standers—"he cuts out wooden spoons with his knife"—increased wonder—"and he shoots with a shot-gun and rifle also."

"But what," they would ask, "is the dog used for?"

"The dog is a *Fugl-hund* (bird-dog) and when it finds the game it stands quite still; then the Englishman walks up to it, the grouse get up, and he shoots them when flying."

This last piece of information was invariably too much for the audience, who would now burst into loud exclamations: "*Ja so! ja so!! han skyd ryper fliegen!!!*"—"*ja so! ja so!*"—gradually dying away like distant music. And on Peter reassuring them that such was indeed the case they would again go off in ejaculations, and mutter "*Han skyd ryper fliegen*" (he shoots grouse flying!) for the next five minutes to come.

Some of the furniture in the room was very curious, and the peasants have an interesting custom of painting the date upon all their solid articles: against the wall stood a large clock, similar to those in general use in English cottages, the date on which showed it to be an hundred years old. On one of the shelves stood a

handsome tankard of carved wood fitted with a silver lid, in the centre of which was let in a silver coin. So much did I covet this tankard that had I not thought it a pity that such a valuable heir-loom, as it probably was, should depart from the owners, I could not have refrained from asking them to sell it.

After presenting the dame of the house with a small trifle, quite unlooked for on her part and which she considered a great kindness, we left the cottage and pushed on towards Bjölstad. The surrounding country was much wooded, and, according to Peter, well stocked with black-game and capercailzie. At last Bjölstad, a few scattered houses in the beautiful Hedal, was reached; and we proceeded to a farm-house, which Peter recommended as possessing superior accommodation to the station.

In the large room on the ground-floor we found the farmer's wife, a pleasant, good-humoured woman; the farmer himself was a bed-ridden old man, but in complete possession of his mental faculties. On learning that I was an Englishman he asked to what part of Great Britain I belonged, whether to England, Scotland, Ireland, or Wales,—all the Norwegian peasants seem to have a great predilection for Wales.

"I once knew a Welshman—David Jones was his name—" said the old man; "I suppose *you* know him?"

"No, I do not."

"Do you not really?" and the old man seemed to be quite astonished that, although I was not a Welshman, I still should not be acquainted with David Jones.

After receiving the assurance that I could have a room here, we walked on to a farm-house about half a mile distant, where old Joh kept an extensive assortment of reindeer's horns. In the large parlour we found a number of people assembled, for on Sundays it is the custom to pay visits. The farmer leaving his friends showed us into a small, clean, room, the floor of which was strewn with fresh shoots of juniper. Presently a servant maid entered bearing a tray, on which were set three cups of excellent coffee, and a plate of Sunday cakes. Our host was very cheerful and agreeable, and he and Peter seemed to have much to communicate. For my part I was glad of the opportunity afforded of getting a little information of what was passing in the world from some newspapers in the room—a great delight after the secluded life of three weeks on the mountains.

Before quitting the house we proceeded upstairs to a gallery running along the exterior of the house, like that of a Swiss *châlet*, where rows of antlers were nailed against the wall. Out of these I selected two pair, and we then returned to the farmhouse where I had taken up my quarters; on reaching which I allowed Peter, after first making him promise to come to me as soon as the man arrived from Randsvœrk with the bag-

gage, to repair to his house, a few hundred yards distant, to see his wife and family. A Norwegian peasant is very tractable when alone, but when in company with others he is frequently most difficult to deal with, as he then does little else but talk.

On considering the journey before me I found that I should be absolutely obliged to start the same evening, in order to reach Christiania on Tuesday evening, as my impression was that the steamer left on Wednesday; and accordingly a carriole was ordered to take me on to the next station as soon as the baggage should arrive.

A sumptuous repast, as it appeared to me at least, of *römme-kolle*, coffee, flad-bröd and butter was now prepared for me in my neat little room to which one ascended by a staircase outside the house. In a short time the man arrived from the Randsvœrk sœters; and, after rendering my appearance as respectable as circumstances would allow of, I settled accounts with Peter, whom I paid at the rate of half a dollar (2*s.* 3*d.*) a day, and made him presents of gunpowder, percussion caps, and all the venison with the exception of a large slice, which I took with me. For all this he was most grateful, and thanked me very warmly, and it gave me much pleasure to be able to make presents which were so highly valued.

At last, after much delay occasioned by the excessive

loquacity of the natives who were assembled in numbers to witness my departure, and all of whom had something to say about packing the baggage, I jolted down the steep track leading to the high road. On either side, in the fields, grew an abundance of fine mushrooms; but, on my asking why they were not gathered, Peter inquired whether they were good to eat, though, at the same time, he assured me that he would not even touch them with his hands still less eat them.

I now bade my last farewell to Peter, and, with many hopes of meeting once more, drove off towards the south on my long journey to Christiania.

CHAP. XV.

Bound for Christiania. — A cunning Skydskarl.—A dangerous Road.—Norwegian Bridges.—Arrive at Viik. — An inquisitive Lad. — Handsome "Tol-knive."—Ponies stopping for Chats.— Snow-ploughs and Sledges.—Miösen Vand.—By Railroad to Christiania.

I WAS now on a high road rattling along in a carriole, but how I longed to be once more wandering over the snowy fjelds. However, there was not so much cause for complaint on the score of scenery for Hedal is a beautiful valley: tall waving firs and spruces clothed the abrupt sides, while the mighty Sjo Elv rolled his rapid stream in the narrow channel below.

Fougstad, the next station, was reached just as it was growing dark; and hence I proceeded in a stolkjœrre, there being no carriole at the station. Soon after starting, the skydskarl expressed great misgivings as to the possibility of crossing a certain bridge on the road; and at each farm-house and cottage that we passed he stopped the stolkjœrre and jumped out to make inquiries of the inmates as to the state of the bridge. At last when it was quite dark and he seemed to be getting very anxious about this bridge, not having been able to

obtain any information, he drove into a farm-yard, and, as usual, repaired to the house.

Presently he returned asking me if I would like to pass the night at this house; and, on my replying that I could not possibly delay my journey, he informed me that, unless I would consent to pay a certain sum over and above the legal fare, he would go no further. For a moment I hesitated whether I should not insist on his proceeding at once, whether he were willing or not, but, being uncertain whether I should be justified in so doing, and considering that the whole sum was a mere trifle, I consented to pay what he demanded.

Turning the cart he drove out of the yard, but had not gone above a few paces along the road when he suddenly pulled up and alighted from the vehicle; at the same moment a small boy leaped down from the wall of the yard, and the man quietly saying "This boy will go with you to Viik" turned on his heel and departed. The whole plot was now clear; he by no means enjoyed the nocturnal drive, and had made the story about the broken bridge merely a pretence for stopping at the farms and cottages to see if he could find a substitute to proceed in the stolkjœrre. Of course the substitute would require payment, and as soon as one was found the skydskarl refused to proceed under a certain additional sum. Perceiving, however, that, if I were aware of his reasons, I might have substantial grounds

for objection, he had cunningly concealed his intentions from me until I had so far given my consent that to recede was impossible.

However, far from the change being unacceptable it was particularly agreeable, for now that a boy and not a man was skydskarl there was much more room in the cart. He was a merry little fellow, and seemed to know the road well—a matter of no small importance on such a dark night. At one time as we were trotting briskly along he suddenly gave a loud *pur-r-r*—the way of stopping horses in Norway: immediately before us the road turned sharply round and a few more yards would have brought the pony to the very brink of the precipice.

Soon we reached the bridge, the safety of which had been so much doubted; but this proved to be quite a myth, confirming my idea as to the cause of the objections raised by the first skydskarl. The bridge was of considerable length, as the Logen Elv, into which the Sjo Elv falls a short distance lower down, is a large river. Wood was the sole article used in the structure, and it was of the usual peculiar build. Large trunks of trees are laid longitudinally over one another so that each layer may project a few feet beyond the one below it. At last the timbers thus placed jut out some distance from the bank; such another projection of timber is thrown out from the opposite bank, and, if the river

be not wide, the intervening space may perhaps be small enough for trunks of trees to reach from one projection of timber to the other, and thus is formed the bridge. If the river be wide, as the Logen Flv, then two or three central piers may be required, and these are constructed on the same principle, the timbers projecting in either direction till the space intervening can be spanned by the trunks of trees.

Soon after crossing the bridge we entered upon a fine, wide, road, which from the telegraph posts and wires we knew to be the highway between Christiania and Trondhjem.

It was near here that Colonel Sinclair, when marching at the head of 900 Scotch to assist Gustavus Adolphus in defending Stockholm against Christian IV. of Denmark, was entrapped in an ambush laid by the Norwegian peasants. They had collected quantities of rocks and trunks of trees upon a mountain overhanging the road by which Sinclair would pass, and these they hurled down upon the band of Scotchmen, crushing the greater part to death, while the survivors were put to the sword and only two are said to have escaped the slaughter.

The skydskarl seemed now impatient to arrive at the journey's end, and at his instigation the horse was urged to a gallop, and thus we accomplished the few remaining miles. But at one time we nearly came to

a break-down, for the shafts, which are clumsily fastened to the harness, becoming almost detached, we were well nigh left sitting in a cart without a horse.

Between eleven and twelve after a pleasant, though rather cold journey, we drove up to the station of Viik. The door of the receiving-house was wide open, but there were no signs nor sounds of a living creature; and, repairing to the building where the station-master lived, we knocked loudly at the door. At last we succeeded in rousing a servant-girl, who, soon appearing with a candle, showed me to a neat little room in which was a real bed, with curtains — the latter a questionable luxury. Once more I was in civilized life.

The luxury of the first really comfortable night's rest after three weeks in the mountains was I fear the cause of breakfast being later than it should have been. On requesting the *pige* to get some of my venison cooked for breakfast I was met with a positive refusal; and I now saw that, although civilized life in Norway had its *luxuries*, one could make oneself infinitely more comfortable when leading an independent life on the fjelds. Then one was at liberty to supply one's own wants, but now at a station one was at the mercy of the *pige*, who generally, instead of being of any service, was merely in the way.

By ten o'clock I was again trotting along the road in a carriole, with a merry lad as skydskarl chatting

away as fast as his tongue would permit. "Have you any carrioles in England?" he asked; "No," I replied "we have not." "What no carrioles?" and he burst into a fit of derisive laughter, as much as to say: "What a wretched country England must be to have no carrioles!" But, when he learned that in England we travelled almost everywhere by steam, his sarcastic look was turned to one of astonishment; though he seemed to consider a large coach drawn by four horses as almost a greater wonder. Questions he poured upon me unceasingly; were my parents alive? how old was I? how many brothers and sisters had I? and how old were they? Nothing seems to interest the peasants more than knowing how old one is.

At the next station, where I refreshed myself with a bowl of milk, the skydskarl was changed for the worse, the new one being a big man, who did not, by any means, compensate for his bodily weight by proportionate mental attainments. Poor Shot now began to show signs of fatigue, and he was accordingly accommodated with a seat at my feet; but he soon grew tired of remaining still and jumped out upon the road again. Ringebö, a small village at the head of the Losne Vand, was reached at about four in the afternoon, unfortunately several hours after the departure of the steamer which plies upon it; and a carriole was again ordered at the station. One of the men, who assisted

in getting the carriole ready, wore a very handsome *tol-knive* (knife), the sheath of which was mounted in solid silver. Here, as at other stations I took the opportunity of the delay occasioned in changing the baggage from one carriole to another, to make hasty luncheons of flad-bröd and milk, which constituted my only food throughout the day. The country about Ringebö is said to abound in black-game and willow-grouse.

Hence we followed the excellent new road as far as the next station, beyond which it was only in some parts that it was sufficiently completed for traffic to pass over. Skirting the water's edge it is quite level and is much superior to the old road which goes up and down innumerable steep hills. The Losne Vand, more a widening of the river than a lake, is very pretty; the sides being in many places abrupt, and well wooded with Scotch and spruce fir. On the whole, however, I must confess that the much-vaunted Guldbransdal struck me as being tame; and the traveller might drive along it without discovering that there was any very beautiful scenery in Norway.

But few vehicles were passed on the way, and the road did not appear to be much frequented, although it was the only highway from Christiania to Trondhjem. The river was more lively, for innumerable trunks of trees, from the forests in the mountains, were floating down its rapid stream. As we approached a carriole or

a cart the ponies invariably slackened their pace to a walk, and it was as much as voice or whip could do to prevail upon them not merely to continue trotting, but not to stop altogether. So accustomed are these sagacious ponies to the chats which always ensue when the peasants meet, that it seems to them quite an infringement of the rules of travelling not to halt on meeting another carriole.

Though we rolled smoothly along the excellent road without interruption, the constant occurrence of snow-ploughs — two large planks meeting at an angle and kept apart at the base-end by a cross-plank — showed that the roads were not always thus unobstructed; and the sledges, to be seen at every station, proved that carrioles were only the conveyances for summer time.

It was not till one o'clock in the morning that we entered the town of Lillehammer at the head of the Miösen Vand. The whole distance from Viik was fifty-six English miles, which had been accomplished at the rate, including stoppages, of scarcely 3½ miles per hour. Every station had been a *fast* one, where horses are always kept ready, and the delays had not been longer than was necessary to change the baggage from one vehicle to another, and harness the fresh horse. Rattling along the wide street of white houses we at length halted at the hotel of Madame Ormsrud, which I found to be very clean and comfortable. The houses

here are all log-built, but, to give them a more refined appearance, the logs are cut square and planed, instead of being used as rough trunks.

A hearty breakfast of venison prepared me, to encounter the tediousness of a long steam down the Miösen Vand, the scenery of which, though pleasing, is not at all striking, the shores being gently undulating and in a great part well cultivated. At half-past seven the steamer quitted the pier of Lillehammer, and we were now rapidly proceeding towards Christiania.

The baggage on board a steamer in Norway is perhaps more varied than that in more civilized countries. Provision boxes are seen in all shapes, and variously adorned with scrolls and paintings of flowers. On all of them are inscribed the date of construction and the name of the owner; some boxes I noticed on this steamer upwards of fifty years old. There were two or three sturdy mountaineers on board whose costume showed them to belong to the Bergenstift.

Amongst the heavier baggage was a neat little carriole well laden with two or three large packages resembling bales of cotton. This belonged to a commercial traveller who was just returning from a business tour through Trondhjem, Molde, and small towns and villages on the way.

Perceiving me to be an Englishman he addressed me in very good English, and asked me how I had enjoyed

my visit to Norway, and also in what part of the country I had been travelling.

"Ah!" said he, "you should not have gone to that part of the country—there is nothing to see there." (N. B. This gentleman had never been near there himself.) "You should have come over the Fille Fjeld by the *road:* then you would have seen something worth seeing."

First I should have taken this road and then that—in fact he denounced my tastes as being quite *anti-tourist;* and no doubt the conscientious disciple of our excellent "Murray's Handbook" would have been equally horrified at the idea of any one presuming to take a route not laid down for him.

"I am going to get out at Hammer," he informed me, "and you should do the same, for the town is well worthy of a visit, and moreover the country is *most* beautiful." However, scarcely appreciating his idea of the beautiful, I declined the proposition, and allowed him to disembark alone; heartily congratulating myself as we steamed away from the pier of Hammer on not having halted at so insignificant a town surrounded by such very ordinary scenery.

Ten hours after quitting Lillehammer the steamer ran alongside the pier of Eidsvold, at the end of the lake, and now the refinement of travelling was still more increased, for railway porters wheeled the luggage up to

an excellent station, and in another half-hour we were flying along in a railway train. This is the only railroad in Norway, and was constructed entirely by English engineers.

Between eight and nine we reached Christiania, and, accompanied by a porter with the luggage, I proceeded direct to the Hôtel d'Angleterre, where I hoped yet to find my companion: but was much disappointed by hearing that he had left the day before for Kiel.

CHAP. XVI.

Droskky. — A State Carriage. — Christiania. — Zoological Museum. — Christiania Fjord. — A determined Pilot. — Reach Christiansand. — Arrive in England.

NEXT morning I determined to sally out into the town in order to reclaim the baggage which had been sent round by sea from Bergen to the care of one of the Consuls at Christiania; also to get what letters there might be waiting for me at the Hotel Victoria and the Post Office, to take my berth in the steamer for England, and to go to a few shops of which I had the addresses.

In order to get through all this as quickly as possible the best plan seemed to be to take a vehicle of some description. Vaguely impressed with the idea of having seen in some guide book that the cabs of Christiania were called *droskky*, I requested the waiter of the hotel to call a *droskky* for me. My wish was immediately complied with, and I waited in the court-yard round which the hotel was built, expecting in a few minutes to see a carriole, or some such diminutive

machine, make its appearance. Time flew on and nothing arrived, and becoming impatient, as economy of time was the sole object of taking a conveyance, I inquired of the waiter when the *droskky* was coming. To all my inquiries *strax, strax,* (*tout-à-l'heure* or *gleich*), meaning any indefinite time you please, was the invariable reply of the imperturbable waiter.

A full hour had already elapsed, but presently the rumble of wheels was heard in the street; and, in another minute, a smart britska drawn by a pair of very fine gray horses, with an important-looking coachman in livery upon the box, drove through the *porte-cochère* and drew up in a stately manner before the door of the hotel. The waiter bowed politely, and said; "*Droskky, min Herr!*" In utter astonishment I looked first at the waiter, and then at the carriage, pompous coachman, and prancing steeds. In this princely equipage I, dressed in a well-worn shooting suit, ragged knickerbockers, leather gaiters, and nailed boots, was to drive, along with Shot, all through the capital of Norway.

The gentlemen sitting in the verandahs round the court laid down their cigars and ceased sipping their coffee to gaze at me in mute astonishment. A retreat would now have been ignominious, and, followed by Shot, I jumped in, and off we drove; first to the Hotel Victoria whence, as the carriage drew up at the door, the waiters came flocking out by scores. Again

we started, and, having secured a berth in the "Scandinavian," drove to the Post Office, then to the Consul's, and lastly to the shops, and soon we rumbled proudly into the courtyard of the hotel, where, descending in state, I remunerated the coachman accordingly.

Once more, but this time clad in respectable attire, I left the hotel and passed the remainder of the day in wandering about the streets, visiting the busy market-place, the quays, and the fish-market, where kippered salmon innumerable were suspended from the rigging of the fishing-boats moored to the quay.

Christiania is a large, straggling, town of about 40,000 inhabitants; the streets are wide and chiefly at right angles to one another. The houses are plain, white-painted, buildings, with nothing picturesque belonging to them; and heartily I regretted not having known on what day the steamer left for England that I might have spent the two remaining days on the fjelds instead of at the dull town of Christiania.

The comforts of the hotel, though the food was excellent, were deficient in the one point most essential to weary travellers; for on retiring to rest I found myself upon a ridge of mattress sloping away to either side, the shortness of the bed not permitting me to lie at full length, while an immense hard pillow, in the shape of a monster piece of wedding-cake, completed the torture.

The following forenoon was quite consumed in searching for the house of the consul, who had so kindly taken charge of my baggage. First I was directed one way, and then another, in fact, so driven about like a shuttle-cock that I despaired of ever finding the house; though providentially I at last was rightly instructed.

In the afternoon I paid a visit to the Zoological Museum, where I hoped to see good specimens of the animals of which I had heard much when on the fjelds; but in this I was disappointed. There was one specimen of a reindeer, but that a very miserable one. I much regretted having lost on the journey a letter of introduction to Professor Esmark, whose acquaintance would much have enhanced the pleasure of looking over the museum.

The waiter next morning came in with an elaborate story, which, being all in Norse, I had some difficulty in understanding. However, I at last made out that a Norwegian gentleman staying in the hotel had heard of a bear and two young ones in the neighbourhood of Christiania; and, learning that I had just come down from a shooting expedition on the fjelds, most kindly wished to know whether I would assist him in pursuit of the bears. Once the message comprehended, the next difficulty was to explain that my plans could not be altered, and also to express my best thanks, and

regret at not being able to have the pleasure of joining the gentleman in the bear-hunt.

It was five in the afternoon when the "Scandinavian" quitted the quays of Christiania, and soon we were steaming steadily down the fjord. Rocky islands, clad with dark firs, dotted the green waters before us; while on looking back a fine view was obtained of the town of Christiania, lining with its white buildings the sea-washed shore, and the castle of Agershuus—the great prison—rising proudly from a stern pile of rock, and frowning down upon the humbler buildings and the calm expanse of fjord.

From the roof of the large cabin, considerately placed between the fore and main masts in order to avoid the rattling of the screw, we watched the rocky shores glide quickly past, as, marking her course with a long line of heaving foam, the vessel sped onwards towards the sea. At the fore end of the cabin-roof stood the weather-beaten Norsk pilot, to whose guidance the steamer was committed while we skirted the coast of Norway.

As we neared a large brig, whose sails flapped lazily to the breeze, the Captain's gruff voice was heard: "Pilot! you will run her down."—No reply from the Norseman, and the vessel kept on her course.—"You will run her down, I tell you!" vociferated the Captain. The pilot mumbled, but, without heeding the Captain, kept his eye on the ship before him. In another instant

we were close upon the brig—a wave of the hand from the pilot, and the steamer, edging off to the starboard, shot swiftly past within a stone's throw of the sailing-ship. The Norseman knew what he was about, and had no intention of being put out for any one, not even the experienced captain of the "Scandinavian"; for all the remarks of his superior were listened to with unmoved countenance, and, acting deliberately at variance with the wishes of the captain, he seemed perfectly indifferent as to whether he and the whole crew thought that the steamer would run foul of the brig.

As it was growing dark we passed a lighthouse on a projecting point of rock, and, in another minute, the steamer was bounding over the swelling waves of the open sea. Just then the supper-bell rang, and all descended to do justice to the excellent fare provided by the unrivalled steward of the "Scandinavian." We were but a small party in the steamer, a few Englishmen, and two or three foreigners, were the only cabin-passengers. With the exception of the custom-house official, who accompanies the steamer as far as Christiansand to see that no smuggling transactions take place on the way, I had the large sleeping-cabin all to myself.

At nine next morning we dropped anchor in the fjord of Christiansand, about half a mile from the town.

Here there would be a delay of three hours, and we took this opportunity of visiting the town. On landing we wandered, through the long, broad, and desolate streets, to an eminence overlooking the town and fjord; while the steward started on a foraging expedition in search of milk, and lobsters for which Christiansand is noted.

A great part of the town had recently been destroyed by fire, but new buildings were already fast springing up to replace those consumed.

By noon we were fairly on our way for England; but, though the ship was under both sail and steam, the coast of Norway remained in sight till quite the evening.

On the morning of our entry into the Humber, the wind was blowing stiffly from the west; and on going on deck we found our captain, well clad in thick coat, fur cap, and waterproof boots, standing on the look-out, and acting as pilot to the ship. As we beat slowly up the turbid stream, the fine steamer "Arctic,"— since lost in a gale on the Danish coast, — was running rapidly down the Humber on her outward voyage to Cronstadt. Her deck was crowded with passengers, with whom we exchanged a hearty cheer.

A few hours more, and we were anchored opposite the murky town of Hull; and the recollection of a wild life among the savage mountains of Norway was

speedily dispelled by the bustle of custom-house officials, and vociferating omnibus-drivers.

Thus then ended a pleasant and agreeable tour, with which the happiest recollections are associated.

CHAP. XVII.

ON OUTFIT.

Carriole travelling. — Pack-saddles. — Tents. — Sir J. E. Alexander's Tent. — Mr. Doyle's Tent. — Major Rhodes' Curvilinear Tents. — Bivouac Tent. — Camp-kettles. — Knives. — Beds. — Sleeping-bags. — Equipment for Pedestrians. — Blouse. — Knickerbockers. — Undressed Woollen Stuffs. — American-Indian Tanned Deerskin. — Shoes. — Mocassins. — Guns and Rifles. — Gunpowder. — Telescope. — Field-glass. — Sketching Materials. — Aneroid Barometer. — India-rubber Boat. — Miscellanies. — Summary of Remarks. — Table of Necessaries.

To travel in a wild country with perfect pleasure it is necessary to be suitably equipped, and provided with such things as are requisite for the successful prosecution of the enterprise, whatever may be its object. In Norway there are two modes of travelling, one — the most common — along the high roads in carriole, and the other with pack-horses over the fjelds.

Respecting carriole-travelling ample information will be found in "Murray's Handbook for Norway." The usual advice given to a person on entering the country is to buy a carriole; but before so doing it would be well for the traveller to consider whether the possession

of one may not prove to be an inconvenience. And this will be the case if there should be much water-travelling, or if any of the fjelds, as the Sogne Fjeld, should be crossed, where only pack-horses can be taken. The objections to making use of the carrioles at the stations is, that a slight delay is caused at each station in shifting the baggage from one vehicle to another; but, if a journey merely in carriole be meditated, the baggage will probably be compact, and will thus cause little trouble in packing on the carrioles. The amount of luggage should be as small as will be consistent with the actual wants.

But for travelling on the fjelds more preparation is required, and it becomes necessary to enter into the details of the subject. Everything should be purchased in England, and the resources of the country should be depended upon as little as possible.

On reaching the point whence to diverge from the high road it is perhaps better to buy a pony for about 7*l.* or 8*l.*, than to hire one. Pack-saddles should be taken from England. In "Art of Travel," by Francis Galton, F.R.G.S., will be found described some pack-saddles, which were extensively used in an exploring expedition in North Australia. The *klövsadel* of Norway are scarcely adapted for a continuous journey; but the klöv, being very light, might be found useful in addition to the other pack-bags.

A tent is absolutely necessary, but it is difficult to determine which sort of tent is the most efficient. Lieutenant-Colonel Biddulph, R.A., used a small tent, of which a sketch and full description are given in Forester's "Rambles in Norway;" where also may be found many other hints on outfit. Colonel Sir J. E. Alexander, in "Arts of Camp Life,"* describes and recommends a tent made of striped ticking and blanket; it is said to be portable, and to be well adapted for resisting either heat, cold, or wet.

Messrs. Edginton, of Duke Street, are manufacturing a new tent from a design by Mr. Doyle, whose improved plan of ventilation has been adopted in the British army. His military tent is supported by a framework instead of a pole. The tent is composed of two parts—a wall, and a roof; the roof is made so as to form a distinct tent in itself, which may be carried by the soldiers themselves in case of emergency. Mr. Doyle has also designed a tent suited for a travelling-party of four. It is supported by four light rods, and a cross-pole; the rods are 8 feet in length, and have a fishing-rod joint, so that each one may be divided into two lengths of 4 feet, for convenience of packing. The space covered is 10 feet by 8 feet, and the greatest height is 6 feet. The tent is pegged on the inside. The tent-cloth is double; and the outer coating is to be not only

* United Service Magazine, October 1859.

waterproof, but also non-absorbent, so that no increase of weight may be caused by exposure to wet,—a matter of very great importance. The great aim of Mr. Doyle's design is to give the largest amount of shelter with the least amount of weight.

Major Rhodes, in his work on "Tents and Tent-life," has collected much valuable information on tents of all descriptions, and has himself invented a tent, which appears to be superior to others as yet in use. The form is curvilinear octagon; and, the canvas being supported on a frame of pliable wooden ribs, the use of a centre-pole is entirely obviated. When pitched, the canvas-bag, in which the whole tent is packed, is buttoned to the inside of the lower part of the canvas; so that the ground currents of air, which enter at the bottom of the tent are prevented from blowing directly upon the bodies of men lying on the floor. As there is a ventilation-hole at the top, a small fire may be lighted within the tent. A stove, with the fuel which is obtained on the mountains, would be useless; but a light chimney, with a large funnel to direct the smoke upwards, might perhaps be used with advantage.

Major Rhodes' smallest "field" tent is 10 feet in diameter, and 6 feet in height; the weight is from 60 lbs. to 70 lbs., and the price 7*l.* 10*s.*; his "guard" tent, 9 feet in diameter, and 5 feet in height, weighs 52 lbs. and costs 6*l.* 6*s.*;

Besides these Major Rhodes has invented a "bivouac tent," which is of a tunnel-shape; it is made with two portable, pointed, hard-wood ribs, and covered with waterproofed cotton canvas; both ends are closed, and the cover is made so as to form two cloaks, or rather *ponchos*. The length of it is 6 feet; width 4 feet 6 inches; height 3 feet 3 inches; weight 12¼ lbs., and price 1*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.* The whole is so constructed that two men can each carry an equal portion. These tents may, however, be made larger according to pleasure. Major Rhodes' tents are made by Messrs. Silver and Co., 66 Cornhill.

Camp-stoves of whatever description would probably be unavailable with no other firewood than green juniper. Perhaps Clarke's candle cooking-lamp would be the most serviceable artificial cooking-apparatus, as it may be used as a simple lamp for giving light.

Camp-kettles are usually expensive and complicated apparatus, which do not efficiently serve the purpose for which they are intended. For rough life nothing can equal a common iron pot, — if flat at the bottom, and without legs, it will be more convenient for packing. It should have a closely fitting lid, which may be firmly strapped on. In this meat may be boiled, or roasted, as described at page 159, and coffee also may be roasted; but when a camp-kettle is suspended over a blazing

wood fire, unless it be quite filled with water, the solder used in its construction will run. In the iron pot should be stowed away a small kettle, in which to make tea or coffee, a tin ladle; and tin soup-plates, tin cups, forks, and spoons, according to the number of the party.

Each man should carry his own knife, — a strong, broad-backed, sheath-knife, hung from the waist-belt.

A bed (if considered necessary) may consist of a length of strong canvas 6 feet 4 inches long, and 2 feet wide; a piece should be turned over on either side to admit of a long pole being inserted; and the bed may then be raised by supporting the ends of the poles on large stones. In Canada * these poles are cut when required, but for Norway it will be necessary to take them from England; each pole is best divided into two lengths, having a joint of galvanized iron. Messrs. Edginton and Co., Duke Street, London Bridge, keep these poles for an excellent little camp-bed, which, however, is perhaps too heavy for rapid travelling.

Each person should be provided with a sleeping-bag, of coarse drugget, 3 feet wide and 7½ feet long.† Such bags have been much used by Arctic expeditions. Mr. Galton informs me that he has seen a remarkably convenient sleeping-bag, used by the customs' officials

* "Salmon Fishing in Canada." Longman and Co.

† "Art of Travel," by Francis Galton, F.R.G.S. John Murray.

in the snow and rain on the Pyrenean frontier of France. It is of sheepskin; weighs 7½ lbs., and is coffin-shaped: the man gets in at the head of the bag. It folds up into four folds to the size of a large knapsack; straps and buckles are sewn to the sides of the folded bag, so as to correspond and admit of being buckled together. Knapsack-straps are permanently secured to the bag, so as to be in the right position when it is folded and secured. A fuller description of this ingenious contrivance, with drawings, will be found in Mr. Galton's paper in "Vacation Tourists, 1860."*

A sleeping-bag such as this, in which might be stowed away a spare shirt and one or two pairs of stockings, would form the most efficient equipment for a pedestrian in Norway.

The best and most comfortable kind of dress is a short, loose, *blouse*, confined at the waist by a belt; its great advantage consists in its not dragging upon the chest and shoulders, and in allowing under-clothing being increased or diminished, at pleasure, according to the temperature. Knickerbockers are unequalled: they give perfect freedom to the legs,—a great point when ascending mountains,—and when wet do not chill by clinging to the legs, a comfort which, when no change can be obtained, will not be despised by any who

* Macmillan and Co.

have experienced it. A Scotch plaid would be useful, and should be strapped in a roll to the back.

The material for dress may be either of wool or of leather. The Highland stuffs of undressed wool, with the oil left in, are excellent, — the colour should be light gray. American-Indian tanned deerskin was used in the "Fox" expedition to the Arctic regions, and was, I believe, much approved of; it is very warm and always remains soft and supple, even after having been thoroughly wet.

Shoes are better for walking in than boots, and, I think, would be better without heels: they should be well nailed, but without any iron plates. In the winter time, on the snow, the foot-gear of Arctic travellers should be adopted: it consists of a large pair of mocassins, and a piece of blanket wrapped round each foot.* At any time of the year, however, they would probably be found useful for keeping the feet warm at night. Both mocassins and Indian deerskin may be obtained of Mr. Roberts, agent to the Hudson's Bay Company, 239 Regent Street. A closely fitting cap, with flaps for the ears, is to be preferred to a hat, which is liable to be blown off by the high winds on the mountains.

Both shot-gun and rifle should be taken, also a spare

* For a description of the advantages of mocassins, *see* Hind's "Canadian Exploring Expedition," vol. ii. p. 88. Longman and Co.

rifle for the use of the guide; for, if he be not properly armed, much sport will be lost. They should be provided with a leather case, lined *inside* with some waterproof material. Slings should be adapted both to the cases and to the weapons themselves, whether gun or rifle,—nothing is more wearying to carry over rough ground than a fire-arm without a sling. The long Enfield is a good rifle for game, and the bayonet would be a useful weapon of defence against a bear at close quarters, and not unserviceable for giving the *coup de grâce* to a dangerous wounded deer.

Gunpowder should be taken from England in canisters, each one encased in a small waterproof bag. A cleaning-rod is quite superfluous, as the ramrod should be contrived so as to serve the purpose; the ramrod of an Enfield rifle will do for both rifle and shot-gun.

A telescope is, of course, invaluable for deer-stalking; but very possibly a field-glass would be found to be more serviceable in Norway, where rapidity of search is generally of more importance than length of vision. One or two small soft-steel axes should be taken, with leather cases and straps; perhaps they might be best suspended from the waist-belt.

Drawing materials should either be strapped to the back as a knapsack, or else attached to the waist-belt: they should be protected from wet by a waterproof case. An aneroid barometer may easily be carried

from the waist-belt, and should be fitted with a leather case lined with waterproof material.

An india-rubber boat would be useful among the lakes, but should only be taken as supernumerary baggage.

The guide should be provided with rugs, sleeping-bags, &c., as, if one person be rendered inefficient, the whole expedition becomes disorganised.

MISCELLANIES.

Writing materials.
Spare cord and twine.
Spare leather, nails, and shoemaker's tools.
Water-boiling apparatus for determining altitudes.
Trawling-lines, and night-lines.
Fishing-rods, flies, &c.
Tow for gun-cleaning; nipple-wrench &c.; bottle of oil; spare nipples.
Pocket-compass, with the bottom, as well as the top, made of glass.*
Pocket-thermometer.
Board for writing upon.
Spring-balance, from 1lb to 200lbs.

Summary.

A horse will not usually travel over a rough country for any length of time with a load of more than 100lbs.†

* See "Art of Travel." † Ibid.

It therefore becomes necessary to consider carefully the weight of every item taken, and I have here drawn up a list of the articles necessary for two persons, giving the weight of each article, and also the total weight of the whole. From this the necessaries for a larger expedition, — one with more men and horses, — may, of course, be easily calculated.

STORES FOR COMMON USE.

	lbs.
"Bivouac tent" (for 2 persons)*	12¼
Iron cooking-pot	8
Tin kettle, plates, cups, forks, and spoons	3
Gunpowder	10
Shot-gun†	7
Waterproof sheet to cover the pack, and to sleep on at night	4
	44¼

ARTICLES OF CONSUMPTION FOR THREE MONTHS.

	Per Man. lbs.
Tea and coffee	4 8
Salt	3 6
White sugar	1 2
	8 16

* Or any other of equal or less weight.

† The rifle will be so often carried that I have not included it amongs the pack-baggage.

BEDDING AND CLOTHING.

	Per Man. lbs.
2 blankets (or their equivalents)	8 16
1 sleeping-bag	8 16
1 spare blouse 1 spare pair of knickerbockers	6 12
3 spare flannel shirts (2 under, 1 over) 2 spare pairs of stockings 1 spare pair of shoes Mocassins and blanket wraps	6 12
Total	116¼

In conclusion, I must warmly recommend Mr. Galton's excellent work on "Art of Travel," and also his remarks on sleeping-bags and their advantages in "Vacation Tourists," to the attention of all those who may contemplate a journey through Norway, either on foot or with pack-horses; and I may take this opportunity of acknowledging the assistance I have derived from "Art of Travel" in writing the above remarks on outfit.

THE END.

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